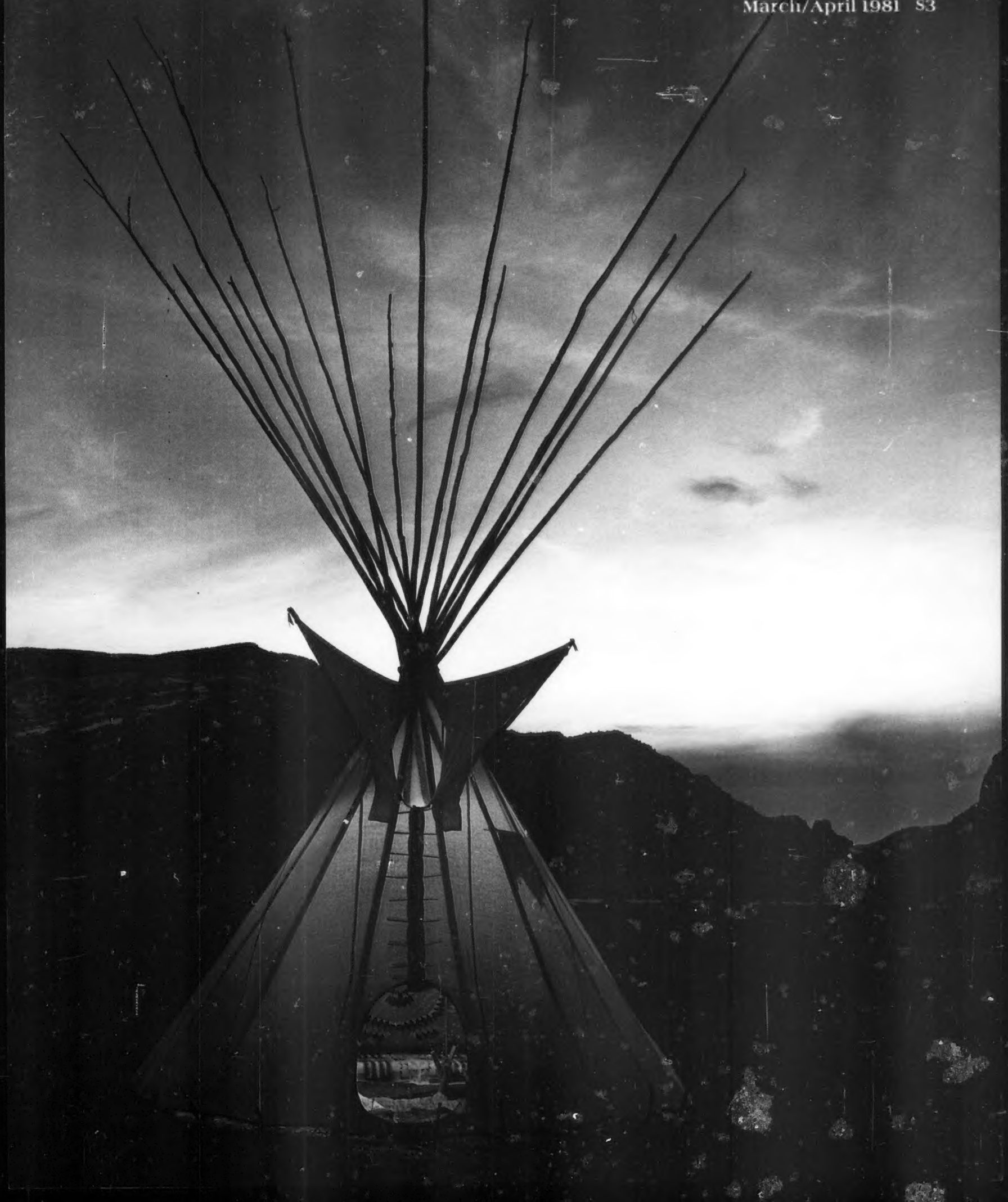
THE AMERICAN WEST

March/April 1981 $3



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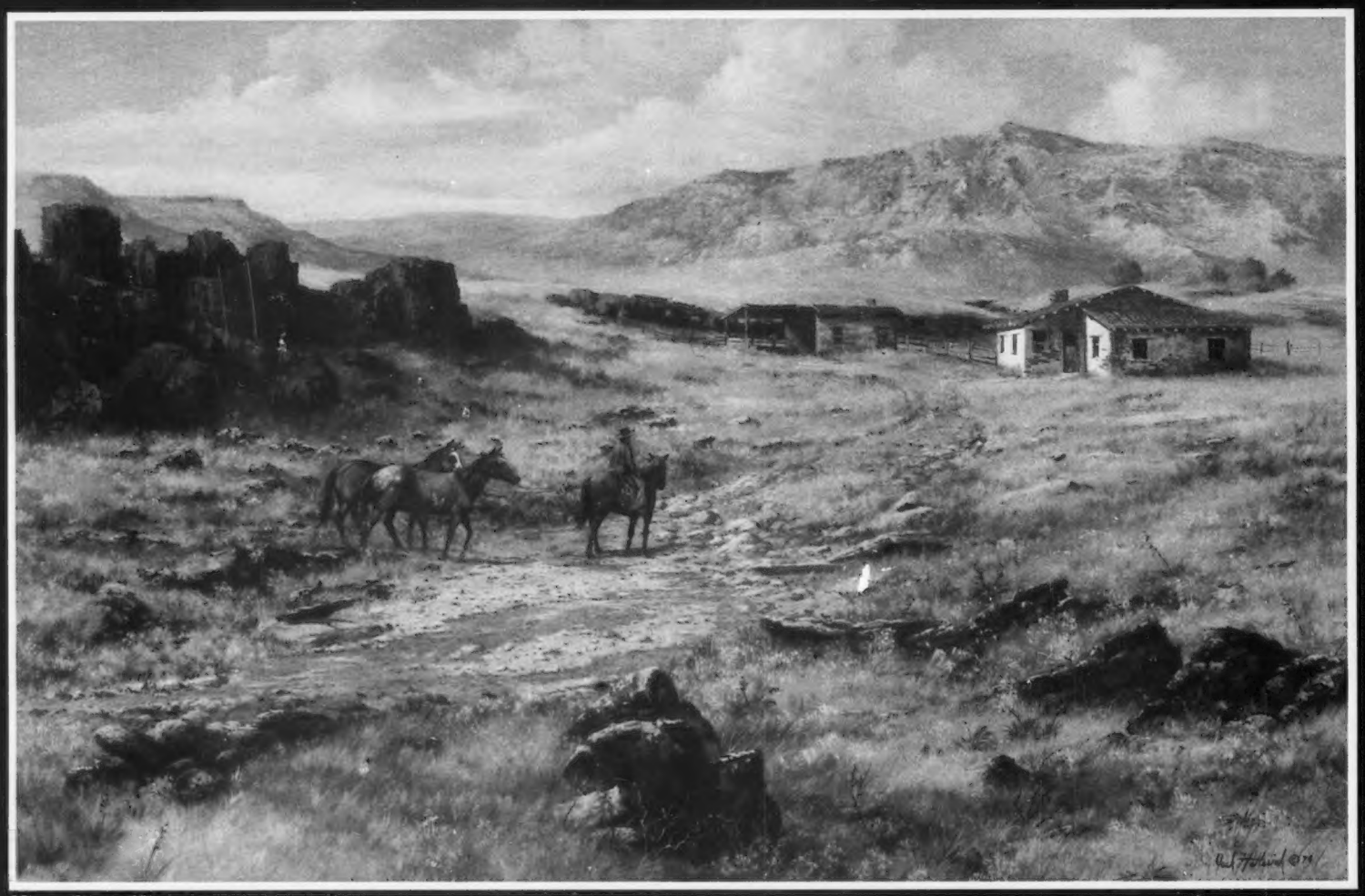

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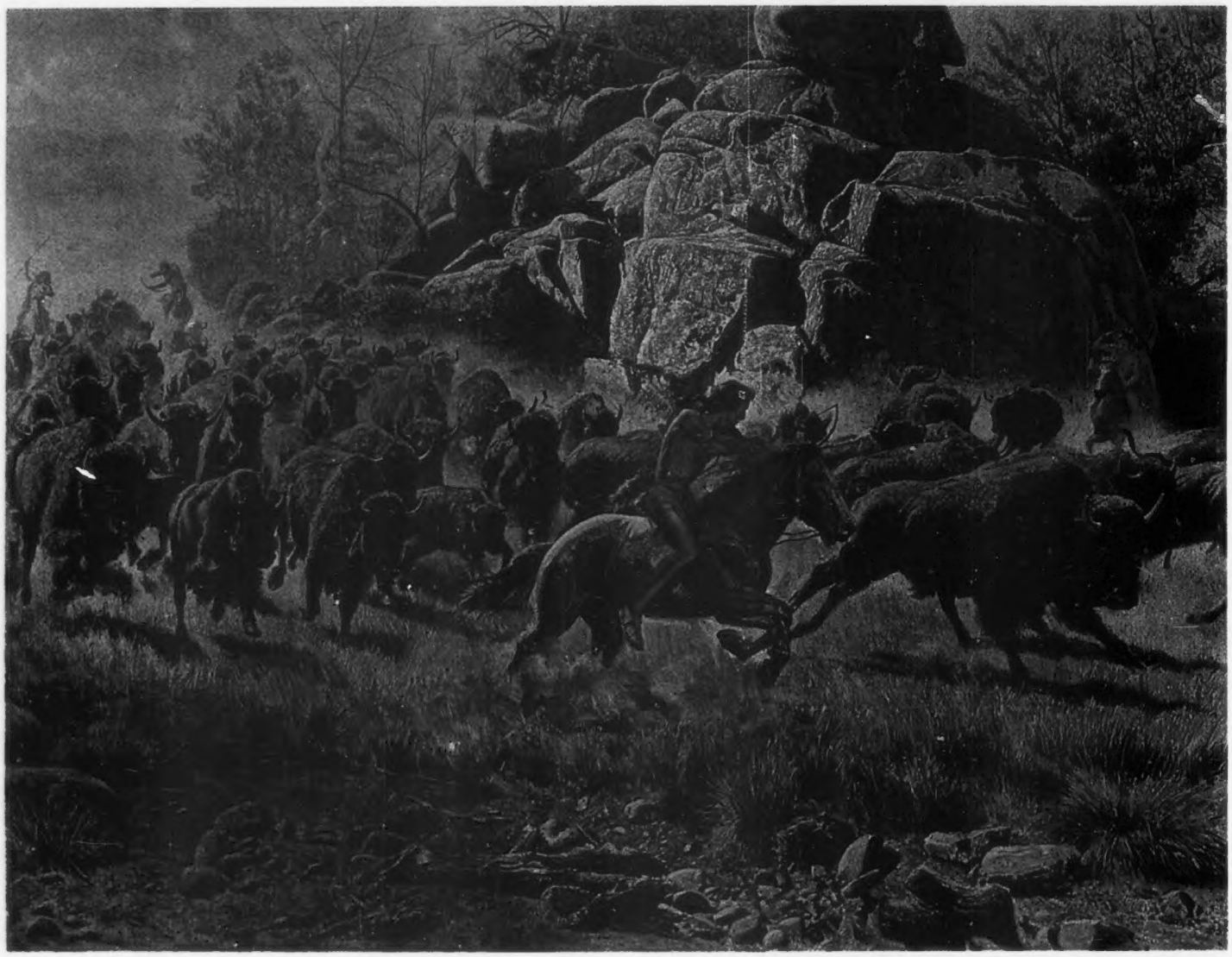

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Cover

SHERI I. HOEM

The Prairie Guardian

"Elegant and cozy under nature's evening canopy, a lodge keeps vigil over the prairie near Cody's Shoshoni River Canyon." With these beautiful words George Horse Capture describes his own tipi and reveals his loving reverence for the traditional shelter of his people. As one of the Gros Ventre tribe, he tells us about tipis that are built and lived in by Indians. He writes not only of their practicality but of their symbolism, of their circular shape which reflects natural movements in the universe, of their ability to bridge earth with heaven. Mr. Horse Capture invites us to share the Indian experience by living in a tipi, if only for a short time. He takes us with him across its threshold into a world of traditional serenity and instructs us in honoring the magic circle of man and earth. We learn that the natural simplicity of a tipi cover must not be desecrated by makeshift designs, that decorations convey spiritual meanings. In his article on tipis, George Horse Capture will charm you, we believe, with his lyrical response to the age-old dwelling of the Plains Indians.

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THE AMERICAN WEST (ISSN 0003-1534) is published in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the American West Publishing Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association, a nonprofit educational organization, Mrs. Henry H. R. Coe, chairman. Editorial, circulation, and advertising offices are located at P.O. Box 40310, 3033 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson, Arizona 85717. Single-copy price: $3.00. Subscriptions: one year $15.00; two years $25.00; three years $35.00 (outside U.S. $1.00 extra). Manuscripts and communications from subscribers should be sent to the above address; however, members of the Western History Association should address communications regarding subscriptions to William D. Rowley, Department of History, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada 89557. THE AMERICAN WEST will consider, but assumes no responsibility for, unsolicited material. Copyright © 1981 by the American West Publishing Company. Second-class postage paid at Tucson, Arizona, and additional post offices.

Editor's Notes

GEORGE HORSE CAPTURE

BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER

WENDELL BERRY

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Occasionally a historian appears who manages to transcend the traditional books and academic strictures of this discipline and discovers (or more often rediscovers) the essence and spirit of the past through a hands-on practice in the present.

The rare historian who falls into this category isn't so much making a discovery on the back shelves of a university library as he is making a circle from his own origins, through an intellectual process, and back again to the same origins. More often than not such historians turn out to be poets rather than strictly historians, for what they have discovered is more of the essence and spirit of history than the usual names, dates, and intellectual speculation on causes that comprise the bailiwick of the traditional historian.

In the current issue of THE AMERICAN WEST we are publishing articles by two historians who write—not about what someone has taught them of history or what they have gleaned from books—but about the knowledge and self-contained spirit that comes from doing, living history.

The two are George Horse Capture, Curator of the Plains Indian Museum at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, and Wendell Berry, farmer, novelist, poet, and essayist. These two men of entirely different cultural backgrounds, writing about the same basic subject, arrive at surprisingly similar conclusions about the use of and reasons for knowledge of traditional dwellings. Theirs is not just some objective knowledge of material and methods—although this is certainly necessary—but a knowledge of the meaning that underlies them, that reaches back into origins and attaches the authors to a past not only worth remembering, but necessary, if we are to evolve in a meaningful way.

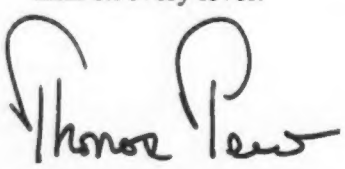
In "The Preservation of Old Buildings" Berry presents the issue as finely as it can be put: "The question I have been working toward is whether we are to be tourists or participants in our heritage." And he tells us that he is interested in the question because he believes it is an eminently practical one.

It is impossible for the non-Indian reader to understand fully the meaning of the tipi the way George Horse Capture does. However, his plain words offer us a strong sense of the meaning of Black Elk's statement—"You have noticed that everything an Indian does is in a circle, and that is because the Power of the World always works in circles, and everything tries to be round. . . . there can be no power in a square."

Horse Capture's descriptions of his own dwelling, accompanied by dramatic photographs taken by his museum colleague, Sheri Hoem, allow us a glimpse into a world that combines pieces into a metaphysical whole that transcends cultural differences.

Taken together these two essays give us a perspective on circles stretched on conical wood frames and squares made with materials of the earth that amalgamate tradition and craft and offer us a sense of history—and reason for preservation—that is not of the intellect but of the heart.

We at THE AMERICAN WEST find histories of the heart eminently practical, as Berry puts it, and also eminently readable because they touch every man on every level.



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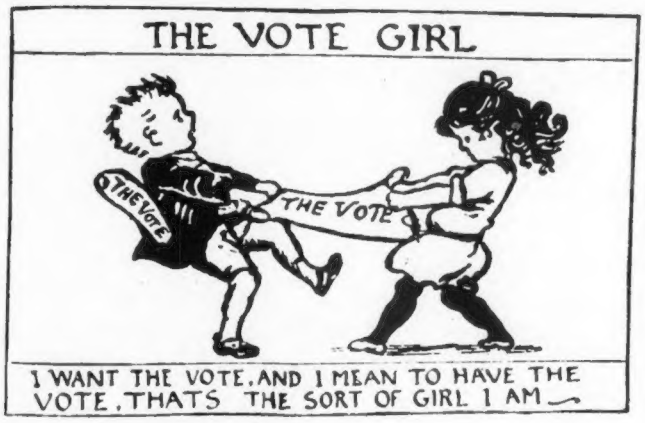

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Letters

Dear Editor:

Enjoyed the article on visiting artists in the Jan/Feb issue.... The ruins of the mission[Tumacacori] were declared a national monument in 1908, and we have been involved in its stabilization and preservation since 1918. It ... is not being restored. The church was abandoned in December, 1848.

Mr. Borg's rendition is delightful... Either he mixed up some titles somewhere or he was playing a wonderful joke on the Hearsts, for this painting bears absolutely no resemblance to any Tumacacori we know....

Nicholas J. Bleser
Tumacacori
National Monument

Dear Editor:

James Maurer's story on adobe in the Nov/Dec issue was well written and tastefully illustrated. Mr. Maurer handled the explanation of adobe's ability to moderate heat transfer especially well, and I wish to applaud him for that small service.

The text on the cover photograph contained an obvious error of fact: it required a lot more than 2,000 adobes to build the Pecos Mission.

Howard Scoggins
Alamogordo,
New Mexico

The text should have read 200,000 adobe bricks.—Ed.

Dear Editor:

I note with great interest and some pleasure that the Council of the WHA has appointed new members to the Editorial Board of *TAW*. As one who has been rather closely associated with the trials and tribulations of the magazine since inception, if not conception, I congratulate you on the fact that the WHA finally has done something for and to the magazine, other than bemoan the fact that it was not making any money for WHA. ... Now if the WHA, its Council and its members will take an interest in procuring for *TAW* the kind of readable yet scholarly supported material it should have, you will be on easy street, and I hope sincerely that this transpires.

W. H. Hutchinson
Chico, California

Dear Editor:

I am a 79 year old interested in the South and West and I want to express my appreciation for the Jan. & Feb. issue just received. This is a superb issue. I thoroughly enjoyed the Oscar Wilde story and the one about Eugene Field. I especially like the story about the Excelsior Hotel.... Good luck to your high class publication.

Henry P. Boff
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Editor:

I have perhaps placed myself in that category of readers whom you refer to as "concerned." After reading the first three editions published under the direction of the new staff of editors of THE AMERICAN WEST, I could not argue with your choice of a word to describe some of us or my place in your new body of readers. May I respectfully suggest, however, that you need not fear greatly the sin of allowing consistency to be the last refuge of the unimaginative. If the standard of excellence of your publication is high enough, consistency could well become your badge of honor.

This member of the old guard passes on all best wishes for your success.

James H. Degman
Citrus Heights,
California

THE AMERICAN WEST welcomes relevant letters from its readers. We will endeavor to print a cross section of those we receive. Please address: Letters to the Editor, THE AMERICAN WEST, P.O. Box 40310, Tucson, Arizona 85717.

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HISTORICAL CENTER
Cody, Wyoming

THE BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER is a non-profit institution dedicated to preserving and exhibiting the heritage of the American West. It is also home of four major museums whose exhibits of art, ethnographic materials, and historic artifacts reflect more than one hundred years of America's colorful past. Together the museums at the Center offer an extensive view of frontier life.

The Buffalo Bill Museum, dedicated in 1927, holds the largest collection of Buffalo Bill material in the world. The Whitney Gallery of Western Art, begun in 1959, features masterworks of American painting and sculpture. The Plains Indian Museum, opened in 1969, brings to life the rich traditions of Native Americans in the West. And the Winchester Museum, whose permanent exhibit hall was completed in 1980, records the history of American firearms through the magnificent gun collection Oliver Winchester began in 1860.

Membership in the Center's Patrons' Association is open to anyone interested in America's western heritage. Annual membership includes subscriptions to THE AMERICAN WEST published six times a year and a quarterly newsletter, free museum admission, and discounts on museum publications. Categories are: Individual—$25, Family—$50, Sponsor—$100, Sustaining—$500, and Benefactor—$1,000. Donations are tax deductible and should be sent to Box 1020, Cody, Wyoming 82414.

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Western Lookout

Buried Clues. A county dump in Fort Morgan, Colorado, has attracted the attention of archaeologists in search of early man. Last December bones, sharpened flints, and burnt stones arranged in a ring were discovered by workmen at a landfill as they dug pits the size of football fields. Digging was stopped to allow experts a closer look. Trapped in the sandy remains of an ancient stream, the artifacts may be the vestiges of a human settlement as old as 30,000 years.

Photos on Exhibit. "Ansel Adams and the West," a show of 153 Adams photographs, opens April 2 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Organized by the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the exhibit will document the famous photographer's changing style from his lyrical landscapes of the 1920s and 1930s to his later dramatic works. Images of Yosemite National Park and the rugged coastline of Carmel, California, are included in the show which closes May 31.

Smoking Pistols. The public now has a chance to see the actual guns carried by westerners like General Custer, Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, and Annie Oakley through a rare firearms exhibit at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming. Included in the display are Custer's pair of Smith & Wesson revolvers—silver plated by Tiffany of New York and fitted with mother-of-pearl grips. The collection will be on loan at the Center for five years.

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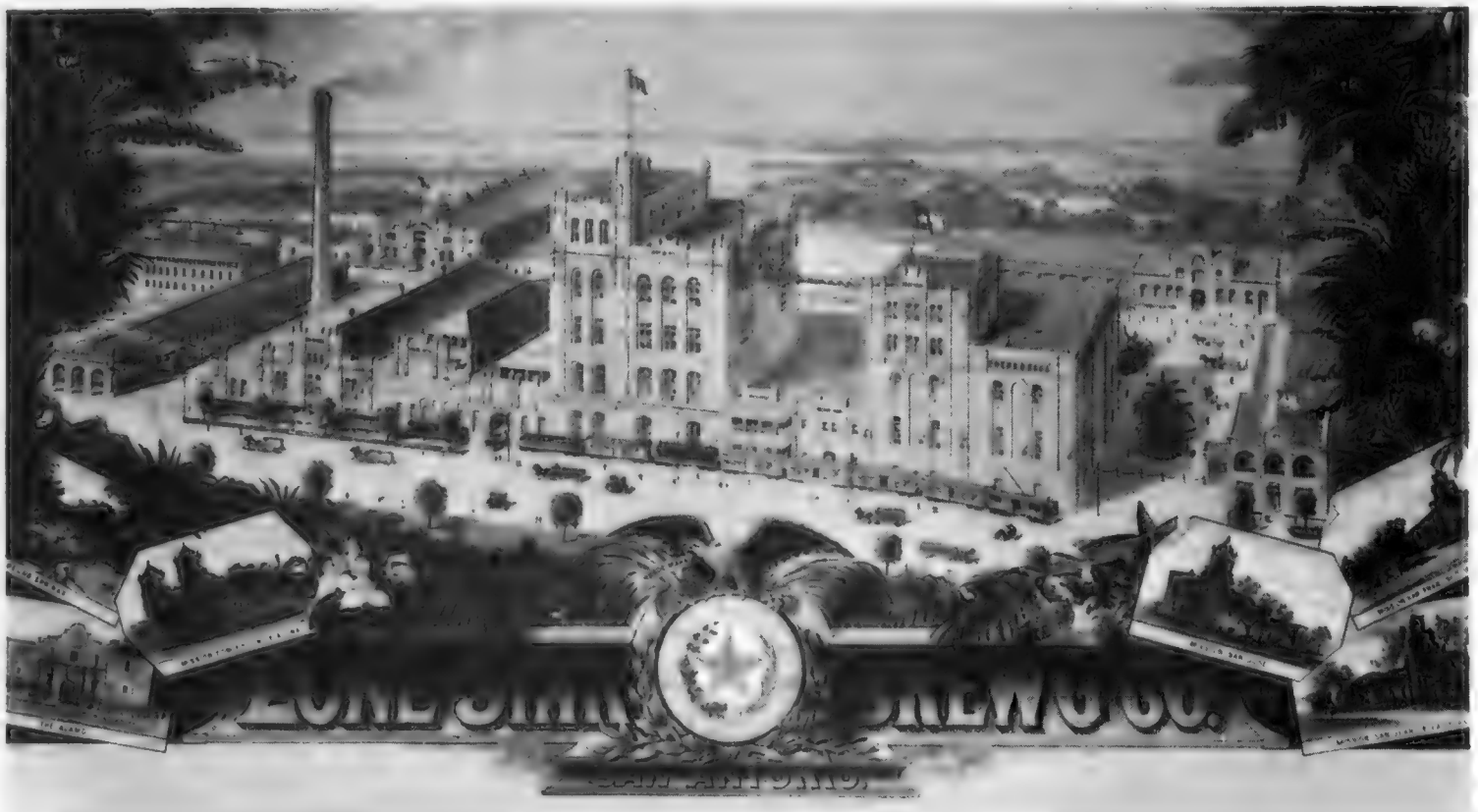

New Brew at Old Lone Star

The opening of the San Antonio Museum of Art on March 1 of this year focused new attention on an old landmark: the Lone Star Brewery, built at the turn of the century by Adolphus Busch. Through a $7.1 million adaptive reuse project, the San Antonio Museum Association saved the stately brewery and gave it a new identity. Now, priceless artworks stand where there were once bubbling vats of malt.

Several aspects of the old Lone Star attracted the Museum Association, which also operates two other museums in the city. The giant downtown brewery offered not one building but several to work with. The Association turned the central brewhouse with its medieval-looking towers into the main gallery, placing glass elevators in each tower to transport museum visitors. The hops house was restored as a restaurant, and the carriage house surrounded by a sculpture garden. San Antonio now has one of the largest municipal museum systems in the United States.

Changes at the Lone Star seem appropriate. During its heyday in the early 1900s before prohibition, the busy brewery served a market stretching from Texas westward to California and south to Mexico. Today the brewery as a museum serves an even larger market as visitors from across the country come through its doors. Exhibits of contemporary art, American Indian art, Spanish Colonial art, and Mexican folk art are there to enjoy: an intoxicating variety indeed!

Art Auction. Many western art collectors with a soft spot for Charlie Russell will soon be flocking to Great Falls, Montana, the town Russell called home. The Heritage Inn there will hold the thirteenth annual C. M. Russell Auction of Original Western Art, March 26 through 28—a gala fund-raiser to benefit the Charles M. Russell Museum in Great Falls. Sponsored by the town's Advertising Federation, the auction brings in thousands of dollars each year and offers a rousing good time. Many guests dress up in Old West outfits, casting their bids in the guise of stagecoach drivers and saloon hall girls.

Eagle Watching. This is the third year in a row that Missouri's Department of Conservation has sponsored Eagle Days to acquaint people with the beauties of bald eagles wintering in the state. Three two-day tours this past January enabled eagle enthusiasts to study the birds in their natural habitat. Groups were taken at no charge to the Schell-Osage Wildlife Area, Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge, and Clarksville on the Mississippi River. If Nature doesn't change her pattern, Missouri's eagles will attract more watchers in years to come.

Cable Car Tune-up. A recent gift of $5,000 from the National Trust for Historic Preservation has brought San Francisco's Committee to Save the Cable Cars closer to its $12 million goal. The Committee is working for the renovation of a National Historic Landmark—the city's 1873 cable car system which needs a repair job of $60 million in order to survive. Eighty percent of this cost will be paid by the federal government if the remaining funds are raised. While the cable cars have been called "an irreplaceable symbol of the soul of San Francisco," they may also represent an irreplaceable part of the city's tourist industry. When the cars were shut down for five weeks in 1979, business on Fisherman's Wharf went dangerously off track.

Adobe Advocates. After stopping federal adobe construction several years ago, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is now taking a second look at the ancient building block which Indians have always prized. Today at the Tesuque Pueblo near Santa Fe, HUD is supporting a project to test the thermal characteristics of adobe walls. The study, which will take about three years and cost $320,000, may turn some Washington bureaucrats into adobe advocates. (For more on adobe, see Western Shelters in the November/December 1980 issue of THE AMERICAN WEST.)

Wildlife on Film. The public will have a chance to see the best wildlife films of the year April 10 through 12 at the University of Montana in Missoula. The showing will culminate the Fourth Annual International Wildlife Film Festival sponsored by the Montana Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society. A panel of filmmakers, biologists, and humanists picks the Festival's best films.

Cabin Controversy. Did Sam Houston (1793–1863), the colorful first president of the Republic of Texas, really live in a log cabin as his political speeches claimed? This question is being furiously debated by preservationists and representatives of Sam Houston State University which owns Houston's Huntsville, Texas, home. Claiming that the elegant house known as "Woodland" had been a cabin of exposed logs with a shedlike porch when Houston designed and built it in 1848, University architects plan to strip off clapboards and the Greek Revival portico. The ultimate look of this historic landmark is now a matter for the courts to decide.

More Desert. In its last report to Congress, The President's Council on Environmental Quality warned that 225 million acres in western states may deteriorate into desert-like lands as a result of bad farming practices, overgrazing, and urbanization. Soil erosion and loss of vegetation are among the by-products expected from such an unnatural shift in the character of the land.

Hail to Spring. A mass blooming of jonquils planted by early Arkansas settlers is expected at Old Washington Historic State Park, March 13 through 15—the dates set for this year's Jonquil Festival. The celebration of spring will include craft demonstrations and bluegrass music. Services are also planned in some of Arkansas's oldest churches.

Carousel Collection. Tigers, lions, horses, and giraffes from the golden age of the carousel have been on view at the Georgia-Pacific Historical Museum in Portland, Oregon. The animals carved between the late 1860s and mid 1930s represent outstanding examples of American folk art. March 9 is the closing date of the exhibit and the last chance for small children to have a special ride.

Continued on page 20

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The fiery food from Texas: Chili

by Randolph J. Jouno

The history as well as the flavor of chili con carne hides an element of spice. This delectable and protean dish (here referred to simply as chili) is not of Mexican origin, despite the fact that chili peppers are indigenous to Mexico, and Spanish conquistadores relished them with delight. The general consensus is that chili bubbled up in west Texas early in the last century as American cowboys borrowed the Mexican and Indian custom of using chili peppers to flavor poor quality beef. Chili is, therefore, a truly bicultural dish, although gringos have promoted it with a fervor usually reserved for all-American activities like baseball.

In the 1850s chili represented a primitive but essential food for Texas soldiers of fortune en route to the California gold fields. Dried beef, fat, peppers, and salt were pounded into brick shapes to be boiled in pots along the way. In the late 1880s in San Antonio, Texas, gaily dressed Chili Queens made their appearance. These women pushed colorfully decorated carts into the plazas where they lighted lamps and set up small tables adorned with vivid waterproof cloths. Each area was equipped with a charcoal burner over which hung mammoth caldrons filled with a previously prepared chili. The aroma of chili peppers blending with beef, oregano, cumin, and garlic drew enthusiastic customers from great distances to devour "bowls of red." Street musicians serenaded the hungry patrons as they ate.

This manner of making and selling chili spread swiftly through the Southwest and moved as far east as Chicago; there, in 1893, a chili stand became part of the World's Fair. Commercial canning of this zippy dish began in 1908. Since then chili has received plaudits from people in all walks of life.

Today, chili cookoffs represent a flamboyant expansion of the early frolics of San Antonio's Chili Queens. The idea of an official chili competition developed in 1967 when the late humorist H. Allen Smith wrote an article for *Holiday* magazine, "Nobody Knows More About Chili Than I Do." Some chili purists labeled Smith's recipe as "chili-flavored beef and vegetable soup." Wick Fowler, then head chef of the Chili Appreciation Society in Dallas, challenged Smith to a chili duel in the ghost town of Terlingua, Texas. The cookoff—a draw—was the beginning of annual chili cooking contests to determine the world champion.

The International Chili Cookoff is staged every year in California, either at the Tropico Gold Mine in Rosamond, an historic spot from hard-rock mining days, or at the Paramount Movie Ranch in Agoura. Here western banjo and fiddle music, parachutists, air balloonists, dancing, and a bluegrass contest provide uninterrupted entertainment to thousands of onlookers as the best chili cooks in the world compete. The American Spice Trade Association sees a widespread "chili explosion" occurring today. The chili cookoff craze has now extended to Mexico and Tahiti.

Chili recipes vary considerably, reflecting controversies over the dish. Should the beef be ground or cubed? Should fresh or dried chilis be used or chili powder? Is suet appropriate? Most "chilikooks" choose beef. A few prefer venison or rabbit.

The original Texas chili was a love union of beef, fresh chili peppers, oregano, cumin, garlic, salt, cayenne pepper, and Tabasco sauce with *masa harina* (a Mexican corn meal for thickening) added near the end of long simmering. Note the absence of onions and tomatoes, now almost universal ingredients. The International Chili Society, sponsors of the world cookoff, prohibits beans in keeping with Texas tradition.

Chili may not yet have a reputation as a health food, but one of its major components, the chili pepper of the same family as the potato and tomato, is rich in vitamins A and C. The Indians of the Southwest, fond of chilis, have a low incidence of heart disease. According to some Texans in the medical profession, a bowl of red has been known to open numerous sinus cavities in the head. Other seasonings also contribute to the healthful properties of the dish. Hippocrates, the father of medicine, proclaimed that coriander prevents heartburn, thyme expels phlegm, onion benefits sight, and garlic is a tonic for the body!

Perdinales River Chili

This is President Lyndon Baines Johnson's recipe, which was widely circulated upon thousands of requests.

1. Put 4 lbs. of lean beef or venison, 1 large chopped onion, and 2 cloves of chopped garlic in a large skillet. Sear until lightly browned.
2. Add 2 cans (16 oz.) of tomatoes, 2 cups of hot water, 1 t. ground oregano, 1 t. ground cumin, 6 t. chili powder, and salt to taste.
3. Bring all ingredients to a boil. Then lower heat, cover, and simmer for one hour. Serves 12.

Chili Cha Cha

With this unusual blend of twenty-two ingredients, I won the 1979 International Chili Championship.

1. Brown 4 lbs. of top round steak cubed in ¼–inch pieces in 2 to 4 T. of cooking oil. Transfer meat to a Dutch oven or other large pot.
2. Soak 10 T. of instant minced onion in ¼ cup of tomato juice.
3. Add to the meat the onion mixture, 2½ T. celery salt, 4 T. Ancho chili pepper or 3 T. of a standard brand, ½ t. curry powder, ½ t. garlic powder, and ½ t. powdered thyme. Also add ½ t. of each of these spices, ground: allspice, bay leaf, coriander, cumin, ginger, marjoram, oregano, paprika, red pepper, and sage.
4. Add 5 cans (6 oz.) of tomato paste, 3 to 4 cups of tomato juice, and 1 large can (27 oz.) of diced green chilis (fire roasted and peeled). Simmer covered for 90 minutes.
5. Add 4 to 6 oz. of Mexican chocolate to taste, substituting American sweet milk chocolate if necessary. Continue cooking for 30 minutes, adding 3 to 5 more cups of tomato juice for desired thickness. Stir frequently. Serves 12. **AW**

Randolph J. Jouno is an American historian, writer, and lecturer. He has competed in a number of chili cookoffs and has won two international awards.

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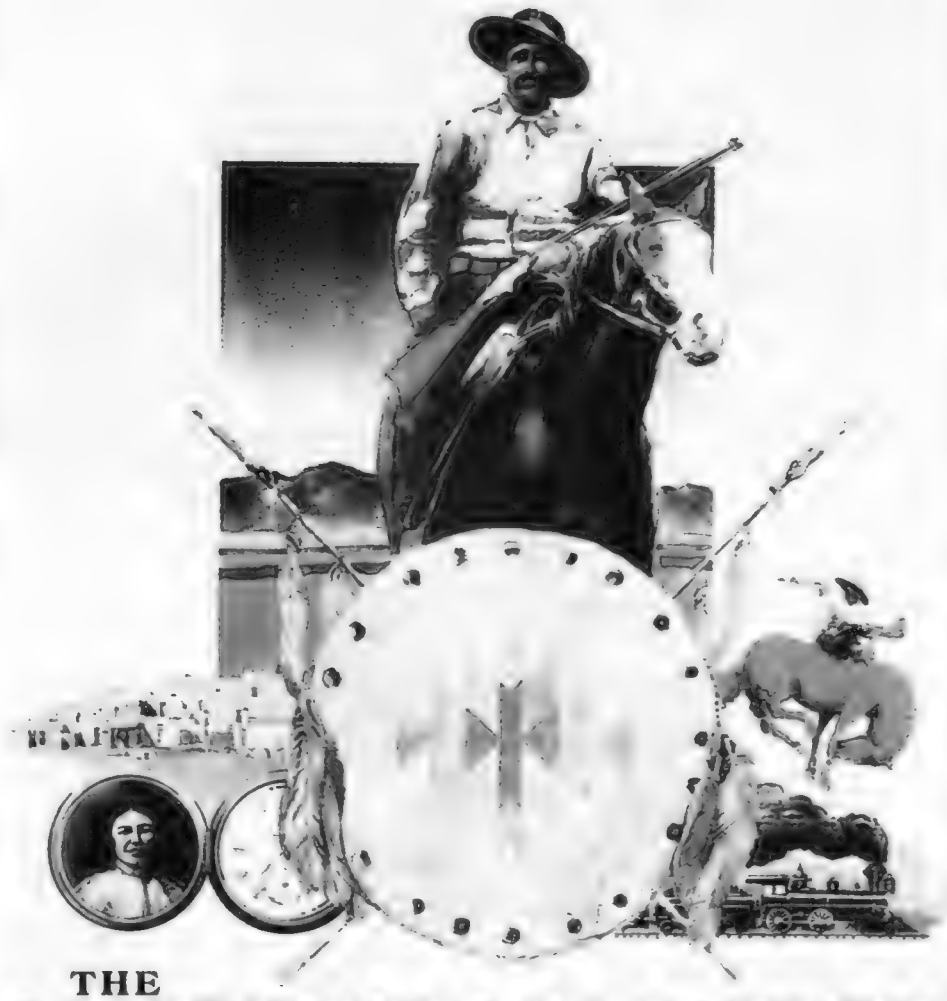

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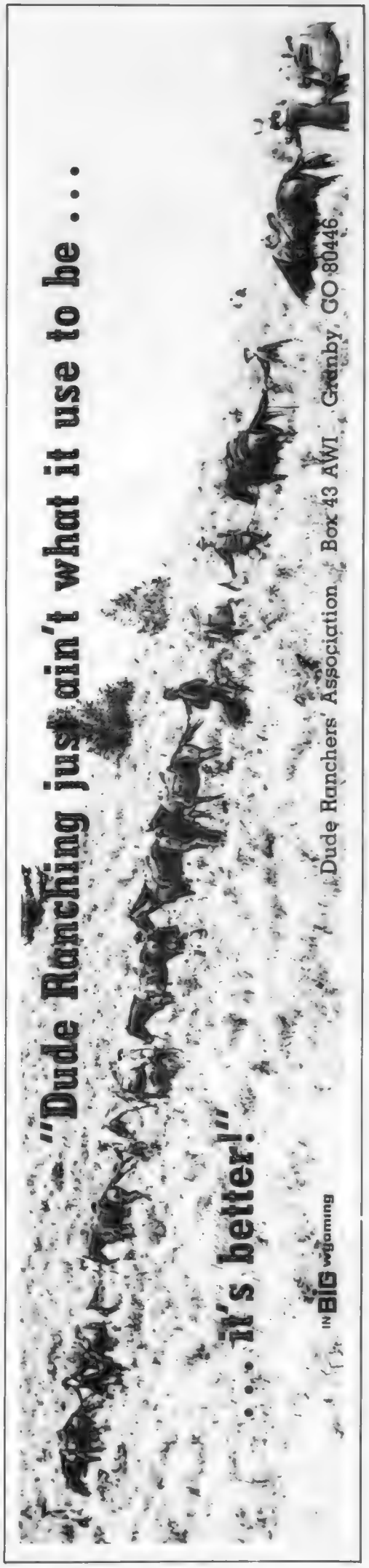

Oregon stagecoach inn:

Wolf Creek Tavern

by Rachel Bard

In the 1860s it took a week to go by stagecoach from Sacramento, California, to Portland, Oregon—if the weather was fine and there were no washouts and a wheel did not fall off the coach. After a hundred miles or so of jouncing and bouncing, travelers longed for a hot meal and a good bed. They found both at Wolf Creek Tavern, one of sixty stops along the 710-mile route of the California Stage Company.

For more than a century, through good times and bad, Wolf Creek Tavern—twenty miles north of Grants Pass in southern Oregon—has offered refuge to the wayfarer. It is not the only surviving Oregon stage station, but it is the only one with such an uninterrupted record of service as an inn. After a brief hiatus for restoration, Wolf Creek Tavern again dispenses hospitality with a warm style, harking back to the great days of coaching in the West.

In the mid-nineteenth century, people and goods moved up and down the Pacific coast by stagecoach or ship. Ships were slow and subject to alarming hazards. So, when the California Stage Company finished the last link in its Sacramento to Portland route, travelers rejoiced. "A person who has no desire to risk his life on the rough coast of Oregon," advised one editorialist, "can take a quiet seat in the stage, pass through a most interesting section of country, and reach Portland at his leisure." That was 1861.

In southern Oregon numerous stops were necessary to change horses for the toilsome ascent of a series of mountain passes. To meet this need, a hostelry was built at Wolf Creek, probably by a man named Henry Smith, between 1868 and 1873.

The original tavern looked much as it does today: neat, sparkling white, and well proportioned. Welcoming the visitor was a facade with an imposing "double piazza" in the classical revival style. On the main floor were the ladies' parlor and the men's taproom, separated by the central hall. In the parlor, ladies were isolated from cigar smoke and cusswords. Sleeping rooms were on the second floor, as was a ballroom (now a useful space for conferences and parties).

Wolf Creek Tavern survived the occasional influx of rowdy prospectors, the end of the stagecoach era, and the arrival of the railroad in 1887, and adapted nicely when the Pacific Highway first ran past its doors in 1914. But by 1922 patronage had declined, the tavern's paint was peeling, and laundry was hanging on the piazza. Fortunately, John Dougall, a traveler passing through, fell in love with Wolf Creek Tavern, bought it, and spruced it up. He added a southern wing with more sleeping rooms, and for fifteen years he ran the tavern in style. Under the next owner, the Tavern experienced another setback when the new Interstate 5 bypassed Wolf Creek. Out of sight of freeway motorists, the Tavern rapidly lost business and once more deteriorated.

Rescue came in 1977 when Oregon's State Parks and Recreation Branch bought the Tavern and set out, with help from many enthusiastic citizens, to recreate an authentic, nineteenth-century wayside inn. Wolf Creek Tavern reopened in 1979—charming, true to its heritage, and widely acclaimed for its accurate restoration.

Furnishings are appropriate to the ages of the two wings: from 1865 to 1885 for the original one, from 1915 to 1930 for Dougall's addition. Visitors who respect craftsmanship will be delighted with the preservation of three brick fireplaces, the paneled wainscoting, and the reproduced "combed-oak" finish of doors and casements. Unobtrusive plexiglass plaques reveal original paint colors here and there throughout the building. Appropriately, Wolf Creek Tavern is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Wolf Creek Tavern offers comfortable, simply furnished bedrooms, each with modern bath. The bedrooms are distinguished by high oak, brass, or iron bedsteads, colorful candlewick or patchwork spreads, and original plank floors. Hospitality given in the taproom and parlor is friendly and generous. Waitresses in costumes reminiscent of those worn by nineteenth-century English barmaids serve three splendid meals a day. Oregon wines are a specialty.

Today's visitors will join an illustrious company. Though early guestbooks have been lost, later ones reveal that Wolf Creek has welcomed a throng of celebrities, including President Herbert Hoover (an avid fisherman of Oregon's rivers). Jack London apparently stayed here while completing his *Valley of the Moon*.

Not only is the Tavern evocative of a colorful past; it is close to a lively present. Ashland and its Shakespeare Festival are only a couple of hours away, and the gold-rush town of Jacksonville is just down the pike. A fifteen-mile drive on a back road leads to the wild and scenic Rogue River. Closer at hand, on Coyote Creek, is the tiny ghost town of Golden, whose unique claim is that as a mining town it had two churches and no saloons.

The Tavern's address is P.O. Box 97, Wolf Creek, Oregon 97497. The inn is open year-round. **AW**

Rachel Bard is a Seattle free-lance writer and author of the Northwest section of Country Inns of the Far West. *This article is adapted from material that will appear in a future edition of that book.*

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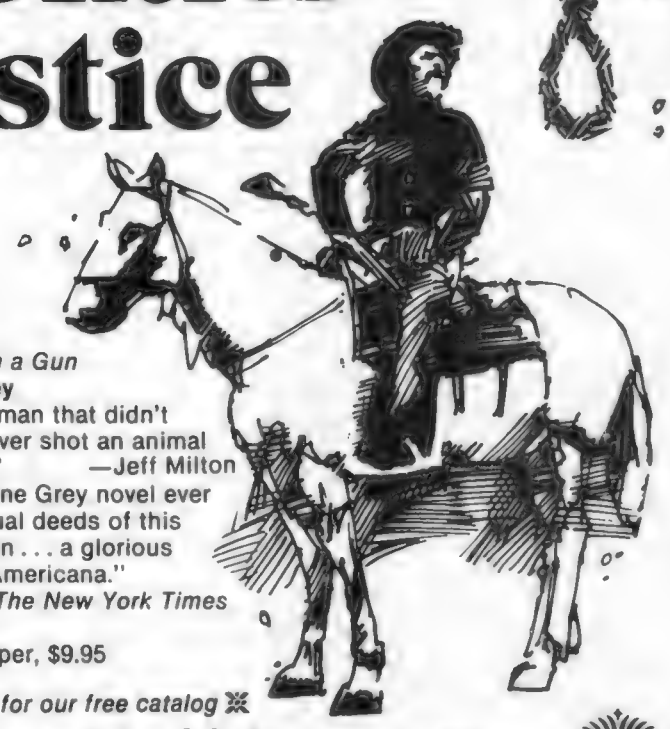

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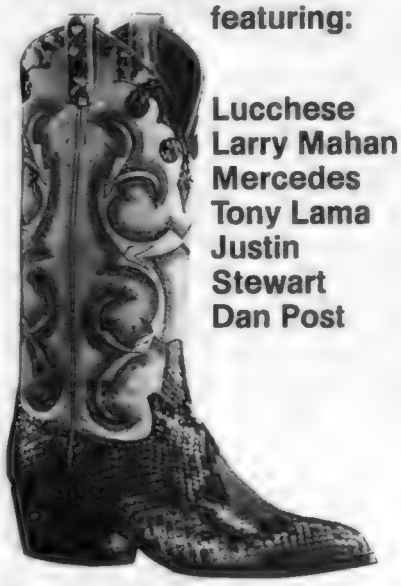

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Western Lookout

(Continued from page 15)

American Historians Convene. The annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians will be held this year at Detroit's Renaissance Center, April 1 to 4. OAH members hope to encourage a renaissance of sorts within the historical profession. Entitled "What Is To Be Done? Concepts, Case Studies, Classrooms," the conference will address the current problems facing history as a profession and academic discipline. The role of history in public life will also be discussed.

Movie Errors. Hollywood stereotypes will be the focus of an exhibit opening March 28 at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona. "The Plains Indians: Fact and Fantasy" will look at traditional aspects of Plains Indian culture as well as at Hollywood images of painted ponies and war bonnets. Visitors to the museum can explore these facts and fantasies through the summer.

Light on Thomas Edison. The Smithsonian Institution's Traveling Exhibition Service is presenting "Edison and the Electrical Age: 100 Years" at the San Jose Historical Museum through April 12. Featuring graphics and period photographs, the exhibit chronicles Edison's life and traces the development of electrical power during the hundred years since Edison invented the incandescent lamp.

Stage Stops. Clay pipes, rifle and pistol balls, mule shoes, and chinaware are among the artifacts discovered during recent excavations at Rock Creek State Historical Park in Jefferson County, Nebraska. Archaeological interest centers on the Park's stage stations built in the late 1850s. It was at East Station that "Wild Bill" Hickok shot and killed a man on July 12, 1861. **AW**

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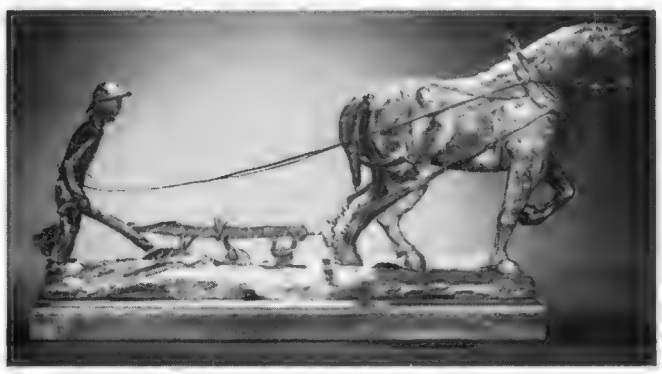
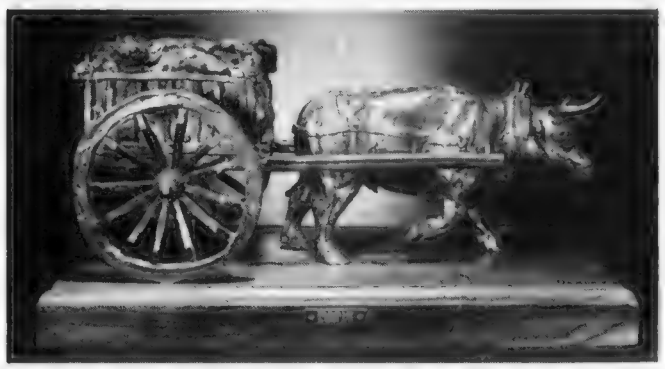


"The Prairie Queen," height 15" x 32".



"The Red River Cart," height 10" x 20".

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Sculptor Arthur H. Norby's sensitive impressions have generated interest from a cross section of art collectors, from wildlife fanciers to investors in fine collectibles. The Minnesota-born artist has received numerous awards for his Western style of art in scrimshaw and bronze sculpture, both of which have been exhibited throughout the country.

Arthur's artistic career includes twenty years as a graphic artist and illustrator. Following years of travel and study, Arthur now creates sculpture, using the lost wax method of bronze casting, from his studio in Willmar, Minnesota.

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Donaldina Cameron: Rescuer of Girl Slaves

by Laurene Wu McClain

DAWN WAS JUST BREAKING when Donaldina Cameron and her devoted aide Tien Fuh Wu hurried through the streets of San Francisco's Chinatown in answer to an urgent message. They ducked into an alley reeking of opium and garbage, stopping in front of a private home.

Cameron forced open the door, ignored an angry man who confronted her, and headed for an inner room. There a Chinese girl, not more than fourteen years old, huddled in a dark corner. "Come with us. We are from the mission," whispered Tien Fuh Wu. Quickly the three fled, while the girl's owner chased them, shouting obscenities in Cantonese. Running up the hill, they darted into their sanctuary at 920 Sacramento Street and bolted the door behind them.

Donaldina Cameron was the daughter of a New Zealand sheep rancher who had settled in California's southern San Joaquin Valley. She seemed headed for a simple rural existence until a visit in 1895 to San Francisco. There she saw in Chinatown the horrors of the thriving slave trade in women, and, pledging to "throw down a gauntlet before the Powers of Evil," she moved to the city to take a position at the Presbyterian Home for Chinese Women. Cameron quickly transformed the Home's modest antislavery operation into a dynamic, efficient machine for snatching Chinese girls and women from the clutches of the tong mobsters who ruled Chinatown at that time.

Tong gangsters had long thrived on the illegal trafficking in women from China. Posing as wealthy Chinese from America seeking marital partners, they lured naive peasant girls from impoverished southern China into "marriage," promising them comfort and luxuries in "Gold Mountain," as the United States was called. Once in San Francisco these "husbands" mercilessly sold their "wives" to Chinatown brothels—thus condemning these women to lives of squalor and enslavement.

San Francisco city fathers had legislated against prostitution, but the legislation remained largely ineffective because government officials and police, their pockets filled with tong money, protected the prostitution racket. Tong bribes were so generous that the saying went, "If you are sick financially get on the Chinatown squad and you'll get well quick."

With missionary zeal and the savvy of a detective, Cameron uncovered secret passageways where slave dealers concealed their women. A few taps on a floor and she knew if it was solid or if a staircase was hidden underneath. Escaping detection presented no problem; she would often ingeniously disguise herself as an old Chinese lady with an umbrella.

She often defied the law when her vigilante spirit was aroused, trusting her own moral sense to guide her. Once when police arrived at "920" with a court order demanding a girl's release to her owner, Cameron's aide occupied the police with small talk, giving Cameron precious time to hide the girl behind rice sacks in the cellar. Always suspicious of law enforcers, Cameron would invite policemen newly assigned to Chinatown for "tea," and then ply her guests with questions worded ever so carefully to evaluate their honesty.

While Cameron's heroic rescues form the most colorful aspect of her life, rehabilitation of the women she had saved consumed most of her time. She was an unbending religious fundamentalist and something of a martinet. Residents at the Home who arrived late for meals were penalized with harsh fines, and those who failed to attend morning or evening prayers were assigned difficult chores.

Cameron showed a certain disdain for things Chinese. Her admiration for some facets of Chinese civilization—its art and literature—was tempered by an abhorrence for the slavery which she claimed was inherent in Chinese culture. "The Chinese themselves will never abolish the hateful practice of buying and selling their women like so much merchandise; it is born in their blood, bred in their bone and sanctioned by the government of their native land," she once wrote. The curriculum at the Presbyterian Home had an almost exclusively Occidental cast—English, Christianity, and Western housekeeping practices were its core—though there was an occasional course in Chinese calligraphy.

She tended as well to an extreme paternalism in her management of the Home. Her protective zeal extended even to the approval of marriage partners for her charges. Cameron insisted on interviewing prospective husbands and arranging Christian weddings for her "daughters." And although she must have known that the traditional Chinese wedding gown was red, she saw to it that the brides were gowned in white, a color always associated in China with funerals.

While some rebelled at the rigors of the Presbyterian Home, most did not. Cameron's papers abound with letters from former residents, some of whom wrote to her many years after their departure from the Home, testifying to the effectiveness of her missionary work. Infant "Donaldinas" were named after her throughout China and the United States, while several of her "daughters" sacrificed marriage or employment elsewhere to work on her staff.

Donaldina Cameron retired in 1939 at the age of seventy, and the Presbyterian Home, no longer needed as a sanctuary for prostitutes, evolved into a neighborhood center. But she continued her involvement with Chinatown, displaying the same resolve evident in her youth as she aided and counseled a new generation of Chinese. By the time of Cameron's death in 1968, "920" had been renamed Donaldina Cameron House, a fitting tribute to the lady who faced the "Powers of Evil" head on and managed in her own way to conquer them. **AW**

Laurene Wu McClain *is Professor of History at City College of San Francisco. She grew up in San Francisco's Chinatown, and, as a child, often played at Cameron House neighborhood center.*

Cow-People and Cows: a retired

IT'S HARDLY NECESSARY TO MENTION that fifty years have brought changes, but pushing along the "drag" of a mixed herd of cattle allows time for a bit of musing about other years. I don't qualify as a member of today's cow-people. Sure, I know which end of a cow eats the grass, but I realized early in those long-gone years that chasing cows' tails wasn't a profitable job money-wise. Skilled cowhands were a dime a dozen then—so I took up other work, though that work kept me out in the backcountry for many years.

This bit of comparing the present cow-people and cow-business with those of other years began in the spring of 1978, when I again visited a cow-outfit in southeastern Idaho, a very small part of the northwestern cattle country, but, all considered, probably little different from the rest. Some maps show this area as the Snake River Plains. Local people call it "the desert"—from the Targhee Range south to the edge of the fertile Snake River Valley. It is a sage and grass-covered ancient lava flow that will always remain grazing land, though there are areas suitable for alfalfa, grain, and spuds. It's a land of wind and dust in the summer and bitter cold and wind in the winter.

The deer and the antelope are still here, but they don't play—they run like hell with coyotes slashing at throats and flanks.The cow-ranches are mostly family outfits with a few hundred head of stock and with alfalfa fields for winter hay. Range pastures measure in miles, but during the summer most of the cattle are grazed on allotments up in the Targhee National Forest. A few years ago many of the ranchers also ran bands of sheep, but they have given them up as unprofitable.

I arrived at the Circle P ranch in early June, the busiest time of the year. Stockmen needed extra help, and help was hard to find—especially help with "cow savvy." Young men today don't have much interest in the long rough days of moving cows, though there are still a few valued ones who by some quirk of nature find the rough outdoor work very satisfying.

Topics of cow-country conversation haven't changed much from what we heard in Yerington, Nevada, or in Bridgeport, California, or other places fifty years ago. After hearing the mild bitching about the need for another hand or two to help with the gathering, trailing, cutting-out, and branding, I suggested that if the boss could find a well-upholstered saddle and a rocking-chair-gaited old stick for me, I might be able to help a bit without getting in the way. I was shocked at how quickly my offer was accepted, and I found myself in the saddle again after a lapse of ten years. (Which shows how unsmart a has-been can be!) Neither saddle nor mount was exactly what I had specified, and it wasn't long until I realized that my old beatup innards didn't take kindly to the jolts of quick stops and turns of hazing bunch-quitting critters back into line. So, I generously offered to take the job of pushing the drag and eating the dust of a small

cowboy looks back

by C. O. Peterson

mixed herd of about four hundred head: mostly red bollies (polled Herefords)—heavy bodied, mild mannered old bossies who, like their ancestors, could develop at times into gosh-awful stubborn brutes whose bunch-quitting attempts would try the patience of a saint.

WHILE PUSHING ALONG the tired cows and calves, I couldn't help musing about the changes in cows, cow-handling, and cow-people since I first met up with those old-timers along the Sierra more than fifty years ago. Much of the change has been what can best be called mechanization. And, too, the cattle are more civilized and less inclined to run wild. The critters of fifty years ago were also "whitefaces," though mostly horned and harder to work. And there was a fair percentage of Durhams, and speckled and brockle-faced cows of doubtful ancestry. Along the western edge of the Mojave Desert were wild and ornery Arizona Reds (mostly Durham) as well as the whitefaces. The more progressive ranches ran small herds of Angus cattle, and a few Brahma herd-bulls were showing up on the desert ranges. Most all of them objected with cunning, speed, and stubbornness to being gathered and pushed along in bunches.

In later years, down in Arizona's border-country, I saw cowmen and cows who were survivors of "the old tough breed." They had to be tough in that land of thorny brush and

Winter work has always been hard and cold on the northern plains. Blowing snow replaces trail dust, and men and animals alike are in danger of losing their way in a blizzard. The lonely cowhand above watches his herd string out in a dramatic line across the snow-covered range after a 1915 storm. When snows were prolonged, the rancher faced a major problem in providing enough food for his stock. In late spring storms, the cowboy had to keep an eye out for newborn calves to prevent their freezing to the ground or being buried under the snow.

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Instead of a Golden Grain or Bull Durham sack in the shirt pocket, there's a pack of filter-tip cigarettes.

*Though he posed for his picture in a photographer's studio in 1894 against an artificial background, this young man was a working cowboy. His lariat and quirt were of braided rawhide, rarely used for ropes on western ranges today. Useful as well as decorative, his bearskin chaps (*chaparreras *borrowed from Mexico) provided protection from dense brush, rain, and biting temperatures. Spurs and gun emphasized his dashing capability.*

rocky hills, where cattle walked themselves thin going to and from watering places. There, too, were whitefaces and Angus cattle, with a mixture of Brahmas and those fleet-footed and slab-sided little Mexican critters who seemed to thrive on cactus and mesquite beans.

Differing from the old-time cowman who usually overgrazed his range, today's stockman is very careful of his graze. Also, he is a skilled veterinarian, able to diagnose and treat ailing stock. The working cowhand of today (not the weekend variety) isn't much different from the old "whangleather breed" of those other years. Though they are better educated than cowhands of old times, there is seldom any indication of it in the salty language of corral work. (And S.O.B. refers with equal emphasis to fence-busting bulls, spoiled broncs, professional politicians, and other no-good critters.) Most of today's working cowhands are of the same lanky, hungry-looking type—needing a shave and with eyes reddened by wind and dust. They still keep the tails of their flannel shirts hanging out and old buckskin gloves in the hip-pocket of faded blue jeans that are stiff with dirt. Boots are well caked with dried manure.

I don't see many of the old-style, high-heeled boots. Usually they have walking heels. And instead of a "Golden Grain" or "Bull Durham" sack in the shirt pocket, there is a pack of filter-tip cigarettes—or a little plastic bottle of "mosquito dope." The wide-brimmed hats are often of straw and are usually pulled, crushed, pinched, and rolled until the makers could never recognize their product. And nowadays almost everyone wears sunglasses.

Work saddles aren't like they used to be; many are of the low-cantle "roper" type with (believe it or not) padded and quilted seats. I don't see many of the old high-cantle, undercut, swell type of "man-traps" that were so popular fifty years ago and made to order in Miles City, El Paso, and Visalia—and those famous old "Garcias" made in Elko, Nevada. Leggings or "chaps" are seldom worn now, except in the brush and timber country of summer grazing lands or in the bitter cold of winter. I can't remember when I last saw a pair of the old woolly Angora chaps that were so common fifty years ago. And at that time, down in the Southwest, plaited rawhide ropes were common. Now, most throw ropes are smooth, slick nylon. Down in the border country of Arizona a few hide ropes are still used. And in that thorny rangeland "pug" *tapaderas* are on stirrups to protect boots and feet and prevent hangups in the brush. I haven't seen a pair of "taps" up here in the north.

MANY OF THE BETTER COWHANDS are high school boys who have grown up with cattle-work and haven't yet learned of, or sought, the benefits of eight-hour work days. Today when you see a cowhand with a cast on leg or arm and ask, "What happened? Did a horse fall on you?"—more than

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likely the answer will be, "Nah! got loaded on beer and rolled m' rig." Or, "Nope, laid down my bike and got busted up."

There have been laborsaving changes in corral work. I have seen the change from wood-burning branding fires to propane heaters, then to electrically heated branding stamps. What hasn't changed at all is the stink of burning hair, the dust, the incessant bawling of cattle, and corrals slippery with fresh manure. Four men now do the work that used to require eight or ten. And they do it quicker and easier. Some "rope-and-rassle" branding is still done. But on the home ranches, calves are herded into a chute, then one at a time into a "squeeze" that locks the critters almost immobile, and the whole metal contraption is tipped over to hold the calf on its right side while the necessary marking and inoculating is done.

There isn't so much of the bloody cutting as in past years. Ear splitting and trimming is still done as required by the registered brand. Piercing aluminum ear tags are generally used, and some stockmen use matching-numbered ear tags on calf and mother. Emasculating of bull calves is done with a restricting elastic band. Along with the marking and branding, the calves get immunizing shots. Dehorning is done with a caustic preparation rubbed on the nubs.

Yes, there have been changes in cowboying. Much of the riding is now done in a pickup truck. And in the short, below-zero days of winter, hundreds of bales of hay are scattered out

Spring branding has always been a difficult, dusty chore. The ropes and fire-heated branding iron in the old picture above have been replaced by electric irons and special chutes which streamline the work today. These cowboys probably posed for this scene, but the calf must have found it all too real. Branders had to be on guard against an angry cow's attempt to rescue her hapless offspring, but the men in this picture do not seem too concerned.

What hasn't changed at all is the stink of burning hair, the dust, the incessant bawling of cattle.

Chuck wagon meals cooked over an open fire were limited—usually bacon or beef, cornbread, beans, and coffee. The busy and tidy cook at right has prepared two large pots of stew, popular fare after long hours in the saddle. Since good range cooks were hard to find and keep, they were often better paid than cowboys. In the picture below, Pecos Edwards and John Young have just trussed up Old Hoggie at the Blue River Horse Camp in Arizona around 1910, preparing for a bit of shoeing.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

on the snow-covered range from a four-wheel-drive truck. Even the saddle horses ride to and from work—in a trailer.

In the summer there is pump tending, irrigating, fence mending, and haying to do. Haying is now done with motorized swathers, balers, and stackers—and one man does the work of a hay crew. In the bitter cold of March and April, there is twenty-four-hour 'midwifery' in electric-lighted calving sheds. A few new-born calves saved from freeze-down out on the range makes a big difference in the year's income. An old cowhand told me that he wouldn't work for an outfit that had lighted sheds. "They expect you to work all day and all night, eight days a week."

On the trail-drives to and from summer graze, the chuckwagon is a deluxe camper mounted on a three-quarter-ton truck. The cow-camp up on the summer range is now a fancy trailer with the conveniences of a water tank and propane stove, and sometimes an electric generator. Yes, things are different now.

THE OLD SATURDAY NIGHT HOORAWING by cowhands in town is pretty much a thing of the past, though a few individuals sometimes have to dry out in the local pokey overnight or be hauled to the hospital after wrecking their rigs.

Friend Don, of Terreton, told of an unforgettable night not many years ago. "We had to move the cattle down early be-

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cause of an early snowfall. When we got to Spencer several sheep-bands had beaten us to the corrals, and we had to night-herd. The sheepherders were celebrating the end of the season with plenty of whiskey and were a wild, noisy, and friendly bunch. One of the cowmen was a staunch churchman and teetotaler. A too friendly herder offered him a drink of whiskey, which was politely refused; so, the cheerful herder poked a cocked six-gun at the cowman's nose and suggested again that he have a drink. The cowman decided that a drink of whiskey would be good on a cold night. The noisy celebrating went on most of the night. No harm done—but no sleep either."

Some trail driving is still done to and from summer graze, with five or six long days in the saddle. But in recent years much of the cattle moving is accomplished with big, double-deck stock trucks—expensive but time and labor saving, especially for trailing in the hot days of late June when heel flies can scatter frenzied cows from here to hereafter.

A bit of unconventional cowboying was done here on the Circle P a couple of weeks after I arrived. An ornery, old stray cow refused to be loaded onto a stock truck. Each time the hands tried to herd her into the chute she tried to run them out of the corral. The loading was finally accomplished but not by a recommended method. One of the boys, on foot, teased the buzzed-up old bossy, then ran onto the truck with the cow in close pursuit. He made it over the side-rack of the truck with little space or time to spare. The other hands slammed the end-gate shut. No, things aren't quite the way they used to be.

I talked with an old stockman as he leaned on a gate rubbing his game leg and squinting at sleek red cows out in the sage. Said he, "Yeah, there have been some changes in cow-work. We do it easier now, and with less help needed. But there's one job that hasn't changed—trailing to and from summer graze—it's still what it always has been, a pain in the butt!"

I couldn't help remarking, "Why you stove-up old son-of-a-gun, maybe that's your opinion now, but there must have been something more than dollars, or lack of them, that kept you in the cow-business for more than forty years."

He just grinned and said, "Well, mebbe so, mebbe so." **AW**

C. O. Peterson *migrated to the California Sierra in 1919. He lived and worked in cow country for more than fifty years and now observes changes from the sidelines.*

The preservation of old buildings: Saving the future through the past

By Wendell Berry

FOR GENERATIONS NOW we have persisted in the assumption that we could make a future in disregard of the past—without an effort to preserve what is worthy in our inheritance. This assumption has required the deliberate destruction of an incalculable wealth, both natural and cultural. The destruction has been facilitated by our failure to perceive or to make vital connections between nature and culture. Thus, American culture has risen largely at the expense of nature, but our contempt for our once-bounteous natural heritage has persisted as an omnivorous wastefulness which has also divested our culture of some of its finest landmarks. Our willingness to squander the virgin Kentucky forests has become our willingness to destroy irreplaceable Kentucky buildings. And these buildings are irreplaceable for want of *both* timber and talent. We have little lumber now that is worthy of a good carpenter and few carpenters who are worthy of good lumber.

The disregard of the past, or of heritage, that has been our policy for so long is now unarguably bankrupt. Its definitive revelation is in the Nixon transcripts, which destroy forever the illusion that one can be safely ambitious without respect, or legitimately hopeful without historical memory and judgment.

The wish to have a future without a past elects vainglory and deceit to office. It strip-mines Black Mountain and Black Mesa. It would dam the Red River Gorge and build a chair lift at Cumberland Falls. In town after town it has replaced history with a drive-in bank. And always the assumption is the same: what we have been does not matter; all that matters is what we are going to be. The penalty, though, is that the less we know of what we have been, the less we are able to determine what we are going to be. As we lose our memories, our desires become vague and uninspiring. Without a past that we have troubled to define and value and understand, we have no standards for the future.

Obviously, then, I am *for* the preservation of old buildings. I would like to see every one of them preserved, as landmarks, as memorials, as public treasures, as living places—*especially* as living places. But in pleading for their preservation, I want to stress as emphatically as I can the complexity of their value. I am afraid the effort to preserve them will be too simple, and I do not believe that they can be simply preserved.

What troubles me is that the most obvious reason to preserve the old buildings is that they are unique. It can easily be argued that these buildings are valuable precisely because we have not, now, the materials or the skill or the money or the time or the patience, or indeed the wish, to build anything like them. And it can easily be argued that we will *never* build anything like them for the same reasons. But I am afraid that these reasons, that argue in the short run for preservation, argue in the long run for destruction. For time has never been sparing of values or creatures that were *merely* unique, any more than it has been sparing of the merely beautiful. The uniqueness of these buildings imposes an urgency upon our wish to preserve them, but it does not suggest the best reasons. What has survived has done so because it is viable or useful—because its value withstands use.

I am assuming that there can be a use for things that is not exploitive or destructive, and that this sort of use is intricately joined to those considerations that we think of as cultural. If we think of a fine old house as unique—as belonging somehow exclusively to its "period"—then we make a curiosity of it, and curiosities, as we know, are dependent upon curators, curators upon budgets, budgets upon governments, governments upon trust or whim or luck. If, on the other hand, we speak of its *use*, we are speaking first of all of its practical value, but more important—since it is a fine old house—we are speaking of it as a model. If we can see *that* use in the house, then we place it upon the same perennial footing as the other works and tools and values and disciplines that have survived budgets and governments.

The question I have been working toward is whether we are to be tourists or participants in our heritage. I am interested in the question because I believe it is an eminently practical one: I do not believe that tourists can preserve anything, including themselves, for very long. And one of the tragedies of the modern world is that it has made us tourists of our own destiny. It has taught us to turn to the past for diversion rather than instruction. It has taught us to look into our inheritance for curiosities rather than patterns. Our old houses survive—and *can* survive—only by accident in places where they stand as examples to no young builders. They cannot be properly valued—and so cannot be preserved—by people who do not *learn* anything from them. It is a fact, which threatens much more than our architectural inheritance, that we have too many university-trained specialists, who honor the past for its relics, and far too few master craftsmen who might assure the survival of its excellences.

I therefore suggest that, accompanying the effort to preserve the old buildings, or rather as an indispensable part of that effort, classes in carpentry should be started in the high schools, and that the study of these classes should be the best local examples of carpentry and architecture. Whatever is learned in this study should so far as possible be applied in actual work, perhaps in some form of apprenticeship, both in the repair and maintenance of old buildings and in the construction of new ones. Thus several pressing needs might be fulfilled at once. Accompanying such a program should be an effort to salvage and preserve for re-use the excellent building materials now being recklessly destroyed in urban renewal projects. I believe that it is only by such practical measures that the past may again become a living presence in the minds of the young people, who might then convey some of its excellences into the future. **AW**

An example of the author's persuasion that old buildings should be preserved as living *places, the log cabin above was restored on the family farm.*

This essay was previously published in Co-Evolution Quarterly, *Spring 1975.*

Wendell Berry, *a Kentucky farmer, is widely known for his award-winning verse and prose which celebrate the agrarian tradition in America. He was formerly a professor of English at the University of Kentucky.*

The Timeless Tipi
Symbol of the Great Circle of Life

by George P. Horse Capture
Color Photographs by Sheri I. Hoem

As the icy breath of the North places its frosty sparkle on the prairie grass and sends the tumbleweeds bouncing to the south, we are once again dramatically reminded of the beauty that is the changing circle of seasons. All things move in a circular manner. If we observe the world around us, we see that nests, eggs, rocks, raindrops, and stars are all round. Even the days of man from the childishness of youth to the childishness of old age complete a circle. These many circular movements comprise the Great Circle of Life.

Indian people have long recognized the significance of the circle. The lifestyle of a people changes and moves in a circle. Ideas once adhered to cease to retain their value, and we examine what was once rejected. Early concepts that were pushed aside as "primitive" and "unsophisticated" are now being reevaluated as "ecological" and "natural." Another circle becomes complete as interest revives in the ancient, circular tipi.

The traditional shelter of the Plains Indian, the tipi embodies the mysterious circle of life. This structure protected the Indian people as they migrated to this continent and spread across it. Tipis were built in abundance over millenia, developing differently in various regions.

It has been said that before the arrival of the horse on the Northern Plains in the seventeenth century, everything had to be transported by the domesticated dog and by some of the people, primarily women. Because the maximum load that could be carried was quite limited, the tipi cover of this early time was small and in two pieces.

The horse made possible great changes in Indian society. On horseback the braves could hunt and obtain buffalo at will, leaving time for the people to develop other aspects of a dynamic culture. Now, there was an abundance of buffalo hides to make tipi covers, and they could be larger, heavier, and in one piece because horses could pull and carry great loads from place to place.

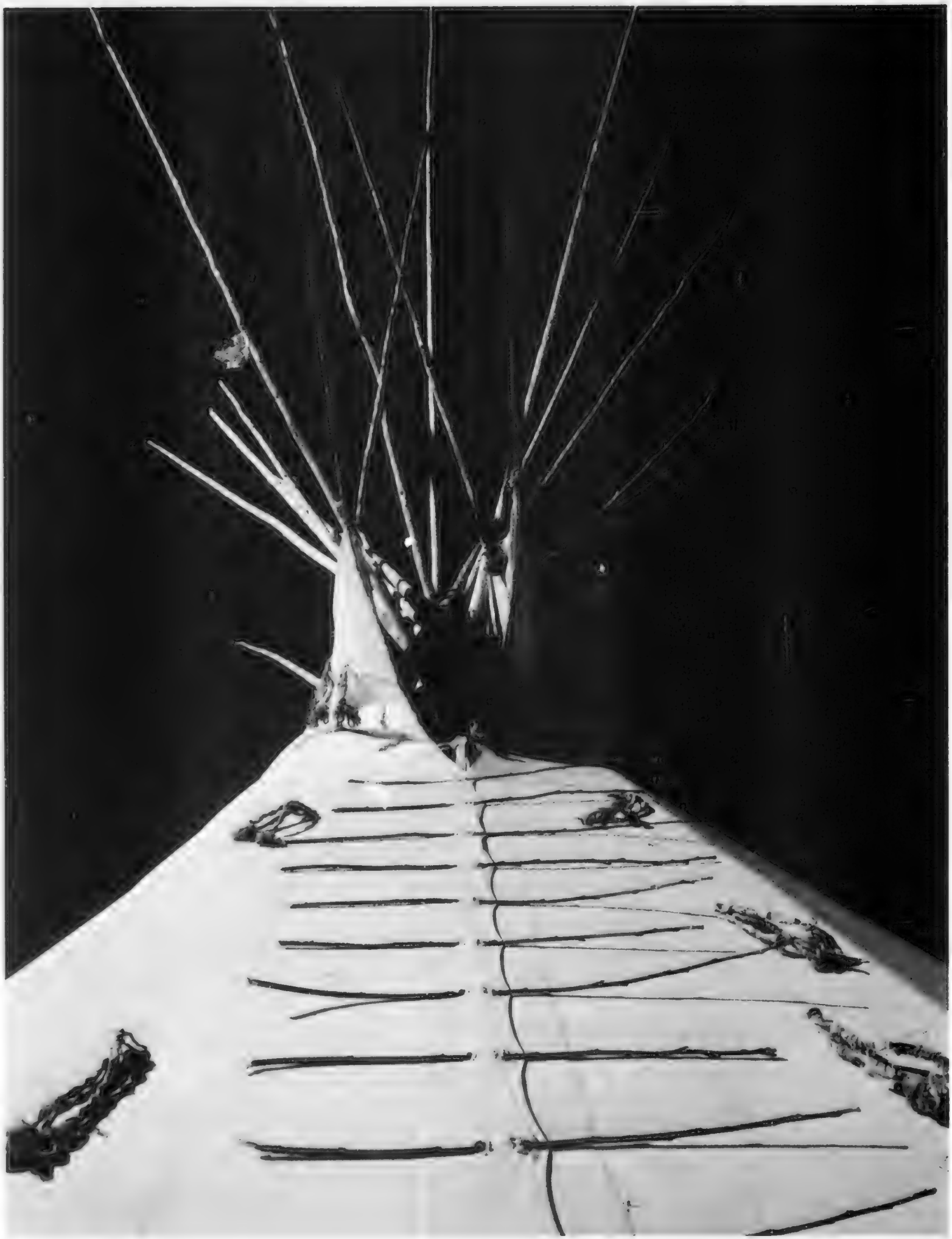
Later, after the spread of the white man's civilization across the plains, Indian people were placed on reservations, and their traditional ways began to fade. As hide dwellings wore out, new skins were difficult to obtain. By the early 1900s, canvas had almost totally replaced hides as tipi coverings, and later even this material became a luxury. Soon Indian people were forced to live in square houses, and tipis could rarely be seen. But the circle continues. Today many of the traditional elements of the Indian people are returning, as the native people and others recognize the inherent value of this proven lifestyle. This recognition happens only when Indian people themselves become their own spokesmen and are accepted as experts on Indians.

Just the name "tipi" conjures up exciting images: grandeur, beauty, strength, Indians—they are all there. The tipi is a testimony to the ingenuity of a people, as it strikes and maintains an exalted position between the natural elements and the needs of man. Its shape occurs in nature and fits comfortably within the environment. The development of the basic design can be easily understood if you can imagine being out on the trail, caught by darkness or inclement weather. With practically no tools, you can gather fallen trees and branches, stack them in a conical shape leaving the center area free for occupation, augment the exterior with additional brush or covering, and you have a basic tipi.

To start your circular movement back to the beauty of nature and to move closer to the Indian mind and its relation to "The One Above," you should live or sleep in a tipi at sometime in your life. It is an incredible experience. Let me tell you how to go about getting a tipi today.

First, the materials. The best tipi poles are from the lodgepole pine and can be obtained from most reservations in the Northern Plains. Usually seventeen poles, trimmed and peeled, are required for a sixteen-foot tipi. Their cost ranges from $80 to $140 a set. The ideal length is from thirty to thirty-five feet, with the base being as small as possible. First-year poles are bright and clean but still retain sap and are relatively heavy. Last year's poles are better because they are lighter and just as strong. The cut poles must be peeled and all surface blemishes and branches cut down absolutely smooth. If this is not done, the knots will soon wear a hole through the cover. We like long poles so the tops can stand proudly against the sky. The Crow people leave the smaller branches on near the top and have as much pole showing above as is being used below. The sight of a well-constructed tipi standing on the prairie with banners fluttering from the tall poles reaching for the sky is one that cannot be equalled anywhere.

As George Horse Capture's own lodge in Wyoming glows in the bright autumn sunlight, its beauty spans all references to time and place.



Lacing-pins to close the front of the tent are easily made from river willows and must be long, straight, and pointed. Leave some bark on the thicker end for added decoration, but remove the remainder. Stakes must be made of cherry or any other hard wood to minimize mushrooming and splitting. Plastic or metal stakes should never be used as they do not fit within the "feeling" of the tipi.

Canvas tipi covers are the only ones now available. In the Northern Plains we are fortunate in having many tipi makers on the reservations. Ask any one of them, and he will be pleased to share this knowledge with you or direct you to someone who can. The price of a sixteen-foot tipi made from average grade canvas will be from $200 up. If you can afford it, buy the thicker canvas and have the seams double sewn. It costs more but will last longer.

When we travel to a campsite in the country or to an Indian celebration, the most difficult problem is transporting the poles. The method that works best for us is to use a set of metal car-top racks that extend from one side of the auto to the other, attached as far forward as practicable. Make a compact bundle by wrapping the poles in a foam mattress and tieing it all securely together. Extend the ropes from the bundle and tie firmly under the outside edge of each side of the bumpers, front and back. Attach reflectors and red flags to tips, and you are ready to go. Such an outfit tooling down the road looks very colorful, and everyone knows you are heading for a celebration.

When choosing a campsite we look for a place free from ant hills that fits within the camp circle and is reasonably flat. If we happen to enclose a gopher hole or a cow pattie, we leave them as they are and live around them. They are of this place, and we are only passing through. The entrance of the tipi always points east, and Indian people say this is to allow the tipi and its occupants the opportunity to greet the new day. Others say it is because this position protects against the westerly winds of the Northern Plains.

Various tribes have their own ways of setting up their tipis. The two basic methods are differentiated by the number of poles used as a foundation—three or four poles. The Kiowa, Assiniboine, Gros Ventre, Cheyenne, Teton Sioux, Arapaho, and others use three poles, while the Blackfeet, Sarsi, Flathead, Crow, Hidatsa, and others use four. In addition, there are several ways to place the poles at the top. Both methods have evolved to become sturdy and efficient. Our tribal group, the Gros Ventres of Montana, uses the three-pole foundation; so, we make sure that we choose the best poles for this purpose.

Tipis are not so easy to erect as one might imagine. Precise measuring and trial and error are necessary. There is the ever-present danger of tying the cover on the lifting pole too high, creating a "highwater" effect. You can always tell the inexperienced onlooker that this is the way Indians do it when the

After lacing pins are properly inserted and centered to close the front of the tipi, the willow "stitching" climbs its way from the soil to the heavens.

The entrance of the tipi faces east, allowing the Indian people to greet the new day.

The juncture of the poles at the apex, and the lacing pins on the entrance side confine the boundary of the top opening. Regulated by the flaps or "ears," the opening allows smoke from the fire to escape or holds inclement weather at bay. The aperture allows man and the cosmos to become one.

Do not be discouraged trying to erect a tipi the first time. Learn from your mistakes.

weather is too hot, that the cover is off the ground to allow for ventilation, but most people will recognize that you goofed. The opposite is also true. If tied too low, the cover will be baggy and filled with wrinkles; this is totally unacceptable.

The actual erection of the tipi is too lengthy and complicated to describe adequately here. Helpful information may be found in a very good book, *The Indian Tipi,* by Reginald and Gladys Laubin, published by the University of Oklahoma Press in 1957. Just don't become discouraged when your first exhausting efforts to set up the lodge end in failure. Learn from your mistakes, and measure and mark everything for future reference.

THERE WILL BE A GREAT TEMPTATION to embellish or to paint the tipi; resist it. Such matters must be accomplished only in the traditional manner or left completely alone. The painting of a cover can be done only under the auspices of a holy man, and the patterns and colors must conform to a dream or to family and tribal customs. Each symbol has a spiritual meaning and cannot be applied as mere decoration. Don't desecrate the tipi with makeshift designs or cartoons. Even the Indian people seldom paint their tipis because the bright, clean, unpainted ones are so beautiful.

The interior of a contemporary tipi is outfitted with regular camping and home equipment and furnishings. The floor is usually partially or totally covered with old carpets or rugs. When placing these, you will encounter the center stakes, and you will have to live around them. We cover only part of the floor or leave it bare, as we like to feel close to the earth. Mattresses or sleeping bags can be placed around the tipi

Where to get your tipi

Inquire at any Indian reservation for tipi makers living there. Tipis can also be obtained from the following: Blackfoot Canvas Company, Blackfoot, Idaho; Blue Star Tipis, P.O. Box 2562, Missoula, Montana 59801; Sheridan Tent & Awning Company, Box 998, Sheridan, Wyoming 82801; Asako Canvas & Tent, 947 Clarendon Street, Sheridan, Wyoming 82801.

The Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, has received a gift which will make possible an important extension to the present display in the Tipi Hall of the Plains Indian Museum. This summer the Museum will open an outdoor exhibit of five full-size Indian tipis, painted by artists from several regional reservations of the Northern Plains. Funds for the project were donated by the Honorable Robert D. Coe of Cannes, France, and Countess Natalie Vitetti of Rome, Italy.

At Crow Agency near the Custer Battlefield in Montana, Joseph Medicine Crow and Wilson Lincoln, respected Crow Indian Elders, erected a tipi for our photographer. The first photograph, below left, shows a traditional four-pole base, the foundation for many Plains Indian tipis. When numerous additional poles are placed in proper sequence, the frame is ready for its cover. The final lifting pole is centered in the back and carries the cover into position. After the vertical canvas is unrolled toward the entrance, the cover is tightened, and the pins are inserted into the parallel lacing holes that extend up from the door opening to the smoke hole. The covering complete, final adjustments to the poles render the structure taut, and once the flap holes are in position, the tipi takes its familiar shape. The cinching down of the central tie ropes from the apex to the ground and the anchoring of the side stakes are the final steps in erecting a tipi. Red tassels, pendants, and dewclaws are the classic decorations. At left, the finished structure stands strong, grand, and beautiful.

We are truly in another world. It is a new one to us but an old one to the earth.

against the walls. Cots and fold-away beds are sometimes used. Tables can be set inside or outside, depending upon the weather and available space. In this environment, tradition rules. The eldest male family member rests and sleeps in the honored location at the rear of the lodge, opposite the entrance. The females and children are scattered around the sides. It is considered impolite for anyone to cross in front of the honored place; all movement in the tipi must be in the direction of the door, never across the back.

Now we are ready to enter the tipi. We pause momentarily at the entrance, realizing that we are crossing the threshold from today into yesterday. Not only are we entering a true Indian world as it was long ago, but somehow we cross the mental barrier of today into something much more pure and free. Bowing to the tipi, we stoop to enter, and we are there.

We are truly in another world, a new one to us but an old one to the earth. The sun on the cover renders the interior brilliant. The striking beauty of the bright spaciousness encircled by the framework that reaches for the sky is unforgettable. Although the "living" membrane separates us from the exterior, we still have the freedom to walk on the soil of the earth and to see and smell the sky. We are now part of this bridge between the earth and the sky, and the past and the present. We can sit now and think about this union, as part of us listens to the meadowlark and the wind.

Somehow you will feel you are home after all these lost years. Breathe deeply and make all of this part of your body and mind. There is magic here. Now you may be able to feel and understand why Indian people have always held the tipi in such high regard. Enjoy this Indian world; we share it with you.

Tomorrow we must leave this magic circle of man and earth. But we will be a little different. We have been a step closer to the center, and this makes us more whole. Perhaps we have caught a glimpse of the power and beauty of the universe and realize how insignificant we really are. With help from "The One Above" the prairie where we camped and briefly lived will never change. Tomorrow only bent grass and sagebrush will temporarily mark the passage of man in the Great Circle of Life, as the Circle continues. **AW**

George P. Horse Capture *is of the Gros Ventre tribe from Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in Montana. He is currently Curator of the Plains Indian Museum at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming.*

Silhouetted against the evening sky, with Cedar Mountain to the south and Rattlesnake Mountain to the north, George Horse Capture's tipi rests and becomes a part of the earth.

LILLIE ON THE FRONTIER

COURTESY OF THE SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA PIONEERS

WESTERN ADVENTURES OF A FAMOUS BEAUTY

BY PAMELA HERR

LATE ON THE AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 4, 1904, the Southern Pacific's Sunset Express pulled to a stop beside the dilapidated wooden shed that served as a railway depot for the tiny west Texas town of Langtry. An eager crowd had gathered beside the sandy track: local dignitaries, cowboys and ranchers in their fanciest gear, clusters of excited schoolchildren, and ladies both proper and painted.

The woman for whom they all waited—the legendary Lillie Langtry—had herself never been quite respectable. Once the mistress of the man who had become England's king, she still carried the whiff of scandal like a heady perfume. Twenty years before, when she had made her first American tour as an actress, Lillie had been called "the most beautiful woman in the world" by Oscar Wilde. Judge Roy Bean, barkeep and self-styled "law west of the Pecos," had agreed. Seeing her picture in a magazine, he had fallen in love. In 1884, Bean officially changed the name of the frontier town he had founded from Vinegarroon to Langtry. Now Lillie was visiting it for the first time.

The crowd spotted her famous private railway car at the far end of the train. It was a gaudy creation that Lillie observed "bore a family resemblance to Cleopatra's barge minus the purple sails, and plus wheels." Lillie herself emerged just as the crowd headed down the track.

If the people of Langtry were disappointed in the fifty-one-year-old woman in the flowery hat who stepped from the ornate car, none would admit it. Though her figure was plump, it was still curvaceous. Her eyes were a bewitching violet blue, and her jewels flashed in the late afternoon sunlight. The only disappointment that day was that Roy Bean was not there. He had died only ten months before, without ever meeting the woman whose picture hung behind the bar of the saloon he had named the "Jersey Lilly" in her honor.

It was strangely appropriate that a town in the American West should bear her name, for there had always been something western about Lillie herself. Though she was born just off the coast of England on the Isle of Jersey, the English could never quite believe she was one of them. She seemed too independent, too adventurous, too shrewd and ambitious. "She meets a stranger as an equal," Mark Twain once said of her, "and although she's so pretty her beauty is blinding . . . she doesn't rely on feminine charm. She's what she is, and she expects one to take her or leave her. She's good company with her friends, but it would be hell to be married to her. She's too damn bright."

Born in 1853, the daughter of a prominent Episcopalian clergyman, Lillie was never a proper Victorian child. As the only girl among six brothers, she grew up a tomboy, riding bareback through country fields, climbing Jersey's rugged cliffs, swimming in its sea. By the time she was in her early teens she was dazzling: tall, with ample curves, a creamy complexion, rich auburn hair, and enormous eyes. She was a reckless beauty even then, and Jersey folk whispered of the night that Lillie, on a dare, ran naked through the town.

When she was twenty-one she married Edward Langtry, a well-to-do but aimless Irishman whose main attraction was his yacht. The young couple eventually settled in London, where a year later they wangled their first important invitation.

All literary and artistic London was at Sir John and Lady Seabright's when Lillie arrived, her vivid beauty only accentuated by the plain black dress she wore. She created a sensation. Artists begged to do her portrait, writers scribbled poems to her on the spot, and dukes and duchesses besieged her with invitations. In the following weeks, Lillie posed for paintings and photographs, and soon her likeness was displayed in shop windows and hawked in the streets. Queen Victoria herself was said to have indignantly removed Lillie's picture from the room of her youngest son, Leopold, who had hung it on the wall above his bed. Crowds mobbed Lillie when she went shopping or riding in the park, and newspapers gossiped over her every move. The eccentric young poet Oscar Wilde, smitten with her beauty, took to strolling about London with a lily clasped in his violet-gloved hand.

Lillie had her first taste of the American West when she met the bearded California poet Joaquin Miller, who appeared at London parties in sombrero, boots, and long golden curls. He regaled her with his adventures in the western gold fields. "Mrs. Langtry is herself a poem," Miller said. "She is complete and perfect, and in no way could be changed for the better."

It was perhaps inevitable that Lillie should meet the Prince of Wales. Albert Edward, the eldest son of Queen Victoria, was his mother's opposite and the bane of her existence. Tall and handsome despite his portly figure, he was a genial philanderer who loved women and horseracing, and indulged in both. England was soon agog and his mother dismayed over the Prince's attentions to Lillie. He bought her clothes and jewels, and built her a house at the staid seaside resort of Bournemouth, where it was against the law to swim closer than twenty yards from a bather of the opposite sex.

LILLIE'S WORLD CAME CRASHING DOWN some three years later when she discovered she was pregnant. By this time Edward Langtry had withdrawn from the scene, though he refused to give his wife a divorce. Lillie sold her London house and furnishings and retreated to France to have her baby, Jeanne-Marie, whom she would introduce for years as her niece. Though it was long supposed that Jeanne-Marie was the daughter of the Prince of Wales, the father was actually the Prince's favorite nephew, young Louis Battenberg, who would later marry a granddaughter of Queen Victoria.

Lillie was now in need of money as well as an outlet for her restless energy. The stage seemed a natural choice. With the Prince of Wales attending her London debut, she was a success. It was enough that she knew her lines and was beautiful.

Lillie was soon spinning dreams of an American tour, but the arrangements she made were strictly practical. "Mrs. Langtry is as tough a businesswoman as she is a lovely lady,"

This watercolor portrait of Lillie Langtry by Helen Brodt reveals her glowing beauty which won admirers in Europe and the United States. Her creamy skin, auburn hair, and large eyes created a stir wherever she went.

As an indignant critic in the New York Times *put it, "Mrs. Langtry has made a career of shocking the American theatre-going public." The origin of this old pinup is obscure.*

remarked her American promoter. "She may smell of delicious perfume, but nothing creases her hide except dollar bills."

Reporters besieged Lillie when her ship docked in New York in October 1882. Even Oscar Wilde, in America on a lecture tour, was there, wearing a black velvet suit and carrying a bouquet of lilies. "I would rather have discovered Mrs. Langtry," he announced, "than to have discovered America."

Lillie's play broke box office records. Though critics found her "a clever, attractive amateur," few people could resist a glimpse of the beautiful and notorious Mrs. Langtry. Lillie added to her scandalous reputation (and increased ticket sales) when she began a flamboyant romance with Freddie Gebhard, a wealthy young playboy. Soon she had become the highest paid performer in American theatrical history.

Lillie had been intrigued by the American West ever since she had met poet Joaquin Miller in London. Her curiosity increased in 1884 when she heard that Judge Roy Bean had named his Texas town for her. That year Lillie played Denver, and in the spring of 1887 began a transcontinental tour. She traveled the West in style. Her specially built railway car, for which the attentive Gebhard reportedly paid a quarter of a million dollars, created almost as much attention as she did. "Its exterior was gorgeously blue (my favorite colour)," Lillie wrote in her memoirs, "and on either side were emblazoned wreaths of golden lilies." The roof was white, the platforms of carved and polished teak from India. Inside the seventy-five-foot-long car, Lillie had her own bedroom hung with Nile green silk brocade, a bath with silver fixtures, and a parlor that featured a piano. Somehow there was also space for two guest bedrooms, a kitchen, and a pantry for her English butler, Beverly.

The West was eager for Lillie's brand of culture, and everywhere she was a hit. "Farewell, oh langorous Lily," rhapsodized one Texas reporter. "San Antonio has seen, admired, devoured with its eyes. San Antonio has paid. . . . Rest assured that we have had our money's worth." And sometime during this period—perhaps in Chicago or San Antonio—Roy Bean, all dressed up in his Prince Albert jacket and plug hat, is said to have seen Lillie perform. Not long afterwards it was reported that the lovesick judge had taken to trimming his moustache like the Prince of Wales.

When Lillie and her company arrived in San Francisco in June of 1887, California women, like those all over America, were naming their babies "Lillie" and wearing the "Langtry bang" and the "Langtry toque." Though San Francisco critics, like most others, found her acting "stilted" and "completely lacking in fire or any other touch of genius," Lillie herself was pronounced aristocratic and beautiful. San Francisco papers also kept the public informed about her romance with Freddie Gebhard. "Mr. Gebhard in Town: Mrs. Langtry's Adorer at the Mission House," headlined the *Chronicle*. In an accompanying article, its readers learned that Gebhard escorted Lillie home from the theatre after every performance and was seen dining with her at the Poodle Dog restaurant.

On July 17, 1887, Lillie was granted U.S. citizenship by a federal judge in San Francisco. While she maintained that she was simply "smitten by the climate and beauty of California," even the most ardent westerner suspected that citizenship was

In this elegant costume for one of her many roles, Lillie appeared regal and feminine. Drama critics were not particularly impressed, but audiences loved her.

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Judge Roy Bean posed in front of his courthouse and Jersey Lilly Saloon at Langtry, Texas, in 1902. Both town and drinking place were named for the famous beauty.

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the first step in a plan to obtain an American divorce and marry the ubiquitous Freddie. About the same time, Lillie and Gebhard paid a reported $125,000 for the 7,700-acre Guenoc Stock Farm in rural Lake County, California. "I am passionately fond of farming," Lillie declared to the press.

Shortly afterwards, two "Wild West coaches" carried Lillie, Freddie, and their entourage from St. Helena, the local railway station, to their new ranch. The road was "rough and narrow, and as the only springs of the two coaches were leather thongs, we felt every stone," Lillie recalled. Still, she found the northern California countryside beautiful. Grain ripened in the fields, magnificent live oaks dotted the hillsides, and in the distance were hazy blue hills where, Lillie learned to her pleasure, "my numerous cattle ranged." She passed through her own peach orchard and vineyard to arrive at the ranch. Loitering near the front door were "a crowd of nonchalant lounging cowboys, picturesquely clothed in red or khaki flannel shirts and leather, bead-embroidered trousers, some on ponies, some on foot." Inside she found dinner waiting: trout, beef, and quail from her own streams and fields, prepared by Indian women who were the only local help available.

DURING HER STAY LILLIE ROSE EVERY MORNING at dawn, dressed in a shirt, pants, and long moccasins (as a protection against rattlesnakes), and set off on horseback to explore her property or take part in a roundup or branding. She relished the freewheeling life at the ranch, and was enchanted, too, when a tame fawn took to sleeping on her bed, its forelegs entwined about the neck of her cat.

While Lillie enjoyed her rustic California interlude, her main purpose was divorce; in a secret session before a local judge, she obtained a final decree. The papers were sealed, and nine years passed before an enterprising San Francisco journalist discovered the news.

But plans began to go awry. Ten racing horses purchased by Gebhard and valued at $300,000 were killed in a railway accident while being shipped to the ranch. Though the *San Francisco Examiner* boldly headlined, "The Langorous Langtry Weds Her Waiting Lover," Lillie had already returned to London and her romance with Gebhard was on the wane. A year and a half after the glorious summer at the ranch, the relationship ended. Though Lillie would tour the West often in the future, she never visited her ranch again. Her horses raced on California tracks during the 1890s without real success, and in 1904 the ranch was sold at a loss.

As Lillie's beauty began to fade, her wits grew sharper. She continued to attract large audiences in England, for she took care to wear elegant Paris gowns and a glittering collection of jewels. By 1896 she was worth $2 million. In 1903, when she was fifty, she returned to the United States with yet another play cleverly designed to lure an audience. *Mrs. Deering's Divorce* opened to indignant reviews. "Mrs. Langtry has made a career of shocking the American theatre-going public," huffed the *New York Times* critic, "and this time she goes too far beyond the bounds of good taste by unnecessarily removing her clothes on stage." Still, he conceded, "she cannot be faulted for wanting to demonstrate that her figure would be the envy of a woman of thirty." Lillie actually wore a full-length slip underneath the dress she took off, but the idea scandalized

Victorian America. As Lillie brought her play west, she played to packed houses.

The previous December, Roy Bean had sent Lillie a wild turkey for Christmas. Three months later, newspapers across the nation announced his death. The flamboyant judge, who dispensed both liquor and justice from behind the bar of the Jersey Lilly, had become as much a legend as Lillie herself. Though his methods were irregular, he had singlehandedly maintained order in a wild and lawless region. Once, it was said, when the judge was trying a cowboy accused of stealing a horse, the man admired Lillie's picture above the bar and mentioned that he had recently seen her perform. The judge melted; in exchange for all the details, he declared the man not guilty.

Year after year Roy Bean had urged Lillie to visit "her town," but she had always been too busy. As a gesture of thanks, she had offered to give the town an ornamental drinking fountain, but Judge Bean had declined that gift. Water, he wrote, was one liquid people in Langtry seldom drank. By the turn of the century Lillie was an aging woman. She had married again, but her young husband was often seen about London with women half her age. Perhaps she needed Langtry, Texas, at last. Perhaps only now could she appreciate the devotion of Roy Bean, who had worshipped her from afar for so many years.

On January 4, 1904, Lillie arrived in Langtry. As she descended from the train, Langtry's citizens crowded around, shaking her hand and introducing themselves. After a round of speeches, the whole town escorted Lillie through the sagebrush and cactus to the Jersey Lilly Saloon. "I found it a roughly built wooden two-storey house," Lillie remembered, "its entire front being shaded by a piazza, on which a chained monkey gambolled, . . . bearing the name of 'The Lily' in my honor." Inside she viewed the enormous bar and the knife-scarred tables with their well-thumbed decks of cards. Lillie was regaled with tales about the judge, and "the stories of his ready wit and audacity made me indeed sorry that he had not lived over my visit."

As Lillie returned to her train, a huge cinnamon bear careened into sight, "dragging a cowboy at the end of a long chain." It was Bean's beer-loving pet bear, which Langtry's exuberant citizens had decided to give her. The bear was hoisted up and tied to the train platform, but to Lillie's relief it escaped, scattering the crowd and causing some of the cowboys to shoot wildly into the air. All in all, Lillie recorded, it was "a short visit, but an unforgettable one." Later the people of Langtry sent her Roy Bean's revolver. The inscription read: "Presented . . . to Mrs. Lillie Langtry in honour of her visit to our town. This pistol was formerly the property of Judge Roy Bean. It aided him . . . in keeping order west of the Pecos River." Lillie kept it proudly for the rest of her life.

The day after Lillie's visit, the caretaker of the cemetery where Judge Bean was buried noted a strange phenomenon. The ground above the judge's grave had shifted. When he told the news in Langtry, people had an explanation. Roy Bean, who had missed the visit he had awaited so long, had turned over in his grave. **AW**

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Lillie may have looked like this the day she stepped from her private railway car on her visit to Langtry. Even in her later years, her beauty was considered disarming.

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The best and most recent book on Lillie Langtry is James Brough's *The Prince and the Lily* (1975), but its coverage is skimpy on Lillie's western adventures. These are most fully described in her autobiography, *The Days I Knew* (1925), in Helen Rocca Goss's "Lillie Langtry and Her California Ranch," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* (June 1955), and in Linda Hall's "Lillie Langtry and the American West," *Journal of Popular Culture* (1974). Roy Bean's life is told with style in C. L. Sonnichsen, *Roy Bean: The Law West of the Pecos* (1945) and in "Vinegarroon and the Jersey Lily" by Stuart N. Lake, *The Saturday Evening Post* (February 7, 1931).

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Tragedy at Oatman Flat: Massacre, captivity, mystery

by Richard Dillon

Into these unknown wilds we plunged, plodding our way, more and more impressed with the horrors of our situation. I shall never forget the sad looks of my father and mother as those dark clouds gathered about them. They seemed to comprehend the perils of the way and the danger threatening themselves and their helpless offspring. — Olive Oatman

I CAN FIND A YOUNG GIRL ten days' travel time from the Fort.'' During the search for Olive Oatman over a century ago, this stunning announcement brought the first accurate information on the captive's whereabouts. Soon, the Yuma Indian who had brought this news to Fort Yuma in 1856 was sent back to the desert with gifts to ransom the prisoner, and soon a young woman's tale of slavery among the Indians shocked Victorian senses as strongly as the massacre of her family and the disappearance of Olive and her sister had held the public's imagination in the early 1850s.

For five years after the foolish Oatman father led his family on a tragic trek westward across New Mexico Territory, the fate of the girls remained a mystery. Their brother Lorenzo, who escaped the massacre, searched for them without success. Soon, Lorenzo and Olive, sole surviving members of a family of nine, would be reunited, and soon they would recall the terror of that wintry day in February of 1851 when the family camped on a desolate flat by the Gila River some eighty miles east of its confluence with the Colorado.

Desperate for food and fearing attack by Indians, the Oatmans were hoping for help from Fort Yuma, the terminus of the Gila Trail. After a supper of bean soup and dry bread, the family was preparing to continue west by moonlight when fourteen-year-old Lorenzo spied the skulking Indians, seventeen ''heavy, stout'' Yavapais carrying bows and arrows and war clubs but no firearms. The sullen Indians smoked in peace with Roys Oatman while they conspired to attack the helpless family, whose only firearms were out of reach in the wagon bed. When the Indians' demand for *pinole,* corn meal mush, had to be politely refused, one of the surly braves climbed into the wagon and began to paw over its contents. Not finding the food he desired, he and his companions demanded meat. The Oatmans had none to give.

When the anxious family tried to prevent the Yavapais from stealing their belongings, the Indians grouped for a moment for a pow-wow; then their leader ''hollered out and gave a shout and they fell to murdering.'' Brandishing war clubs, they began to brain everyone in the family except thirteen-year-old Olive and seven-year-old Mary Ann, whom they hustled aside as captives. Charles Nahl's heroic painting to the contrary, the Oatmans put up no resistance to the despicable attack. They were slaughtered like sheep.

Hours after the Yavapais rifled the wagon and fled with their captives, looking over their shoulders for a pursuit that never came, one of the bloody ''corpses'' left behind stirred and groaned. Lorenzo had survived, though his head had been smashed with a club, his face had been ground into the lava rocks, and he had been dragged by his heels over the mesa. When the Indians dropped him and returned to the pillage of the wagon, Lorenzo got to his hands and knees long enough to creep to the edge of the cliff and roll down to the bushes at its foot, before passing out.

The key to the tragedy at Oatman Flat lies buried in the complex personality of the foolhardy father, Roys Oatman. In 1849 the forty-year-old Oatman decided to abandon the cold and damp Illinois winters for a Western climate which he thought congenial to his health and state of mind. According to his doting daughter Olive, he would recuperate his wasted energies and live to ''bless and educate his family.''

But Roys Oatman's migration was not the simple move of a Midwesterner to a gold-rich California being touted by Mexican War veterans or returned Argonauts. Although the fact was not made public, the Oatmans were Mormon converts—not to the church of Brigham Young but to a splinter sect which followed James Colin Brewster. His particular Zion lay far to the southwest of the Latter Day Saints' Deseret on the shores of the Great Salt Lake. Brewster called his disciples to follow him to his promised land of Bashan in the extreme southwestern corner of New Mexico Territory, where the Colorado River neared the Gulf of Mexico.

Why the secrecy about the Oatmans' Mormonism? Perhaps the sole survivors of the family, Olive and Lorenzo, were embarrassed by or even ashamed of their membership after the tragedy. Mormons were unpopular in 1857. The Mountain Meadows Massacre (in which a number of Mormons joined

Bearing tatoo marks on the chin from her Indian captivity, Olive Oatman maintained a ladylike dignity in public after her rescue, but privately she grieved.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OWNERS MR AND MRS STEPHEN V NAHL PHOTO COURTESY OF CROCKER ART MUSEUM, SACRAMENTO

Massacre of the Oatman Family, c. 1856
Wash over graphite on paper by Charles Christian Nahl

Traveling westward by covered wagon in 1851, Roys Oatman and his wife and seven children were attacked by Yavapai Indians about eighty miles east of Fort Yuma. In the drawing above, Charles Nahl exercised considerable artistic license. Nahl depicts Oatman and his family as putting up a spirited resistance, but the defenseless pilgrims were actually butchered like sheep. Critics of Nahl's work have pointed out that the Indians resemble mulattoes.

Indians in murdering a non-Mormon emigrant group) occurred in August of that year, and the Utah War between the Army of the West and the Saints dragged on from 1857 until mid-1858.

THE OATMAN FAMILY TREK WEST began ordinarily enough. Oatman sold off his property for $1,500 and bought a complete outfit—a wagon, three yoke of oxen, milch cows, riding horses—plus enough provisions, he estimated, for eighteen months of prairie and desert travel. The family joined "The Colorado [River] Camp," composed of a total of fifty-two Brewsterites who set out from Independence, Missouri, on August 9, 1850, in about twenty covered wagons.

Travel across the plains was a continuous, happy picnic for the youngsters, with much dancing in the evenings and footraces at daytime halts. When there were trees as well as time, the kids even made swings.

The adults, alas, were not so jolly. Initially, they socialized and made new friends after the wagons were circled for the night to pen the stock. Then a crier called everyone around the campfire for worship. But, during a lazy, time-wasting week at Council Grove, Kansas, friction began to replace harmony among the not-so-saintly leaders of the wagon train. Olive, who held her willful father blameless for any strife, attributed all dissension to the "religious penchants and strong prejudices of certain restless spirits in our company." The wagons proceeded to the Big Bend of the Arkansas River without incident, except for a minor Indian scare, but the wrangling among the travelers continued.

After increasing disaffection along the Cimarron Cutoff, the

Roys Oatman traded his religious fervor for good, old-fashioned gold fever. California became the focus of his dreams.

bickering travelers reached the New Mexican frontier settlements of Mora and Las Vegas. They then pushed on to camp at The Forks, located at Santa Fe Pass, or "The Natural Pass," as they called it, presumably either Apache Canyon or Glorieta Pass itself. There the festering crisis broke, and the angry party split in two. Thirty-two persons, including the leader, Brewster, chose the normal, more northerly road westward via Santa Fe. Roys Oatman and his friends opted for the southerly route by way of Socorro and the San Pedro and Santa Cruz rivers.

Apparently, the final breaking point came over trail leadership rather than over "religious penchants." Olive attributed the heated debates to the report that the north road, the Santa Fe Trail per se, was heavy with sand. Oatman and his allies, despite misgivings, insisted on proceeding south to strike the Kearny-Cooke military road to the Gila Trail, blazed during the Mexican War.

But this was not all. Brewster had apparently decided to stop short of his original goal of Bashan. In the end, he located his religious community, Colonia, seven miles south of Socorro Peak.

As for Roys Oatman, though he still talked of Bashan (or Lahoga, as he now called the Gila utopia), he had already traded his religious fervor for good, old-fashioned gold fever. Lorenzo recollected that the project of settlement in New Mexico Territory was now entirely abandoned. "California had become the place where we looked for a termination of our travel."

Now there were only twenty persons to face the most dangerous part of the journey, and half of them were Oatmans, mostly young children. The foolish decision to split the weak party and head for *Apachería* was made by stubborn Roys Oatman. The clerk of his detachment wrote on October 26, 1850, near Socorro, that Captain Oatman had replaced Jackson Goodale as wagon boss because the latter had "proved disadvantageous to the company." So, the bullheaded Oatman led the way with his wife, Mary Ann, and seven children—Lucy, Lorenzo, Olive Ann, Mary Ann, Roys junior, C. A., and a baby brother whose name has been lost—plus another baby "on the way."

Following Oatman's wagon were seven others, those of Thompson, Wilder, Brimhall, Cheeseborough, the Kelley brothers, Dr. Lane, and a man named Meetere or Mutere. The party rested its animals in the security of well-named Socorro, which was guarded by an Army detachment. But the emigrants found that greatly needed provisions were bad, expensive, and scarce. The countryside was so barren of food (though lush with tales of hostile Indians ahead) that some of the travelers decided to stay in Socorro.

Although his oxen were failing and two of his horses had been stolen, Oatman pushed recklessly on. As the emigrants neared the Santa Cruz River settlements, scattered like beads on a thread, they encountered mountains which provided not only the most beautiful scenery of the journey but also abundant grass, firewood, and pine-shaded, crystalline streams. But this stretch of high country was not entirely idyllic. The steep climbs and drops exhausted the ox teams, and cold weather brought snow. When the travelers holed up in a patch of timber, visiting Apaches not only bullied them out of precious pots of beans but ran off twenty head of stock. This was a disastrous blow. Oatman now had to leave some of the wagons and baggage behind.

The fatigued and hungry Americans were given a hearty welcome, as reinforcements, by the hundred Mexicans who were virtually besieged in Santa Cruz. The population lived in constant dread of the Apaches. Olive described Santa Cruz as a very rich and desirable place to live. But since there was no food except pumpkins after Apache lootings, the *extranjeros* moved on.

Another reason for the Americans' departure was Roys Oatman's worsening case of gold fever. Later, Lorenzo would recall, "We were now en route for the Eureka of the Pacific Slope, and we thought we had not time to waste between us and the realization of our golden dreams."

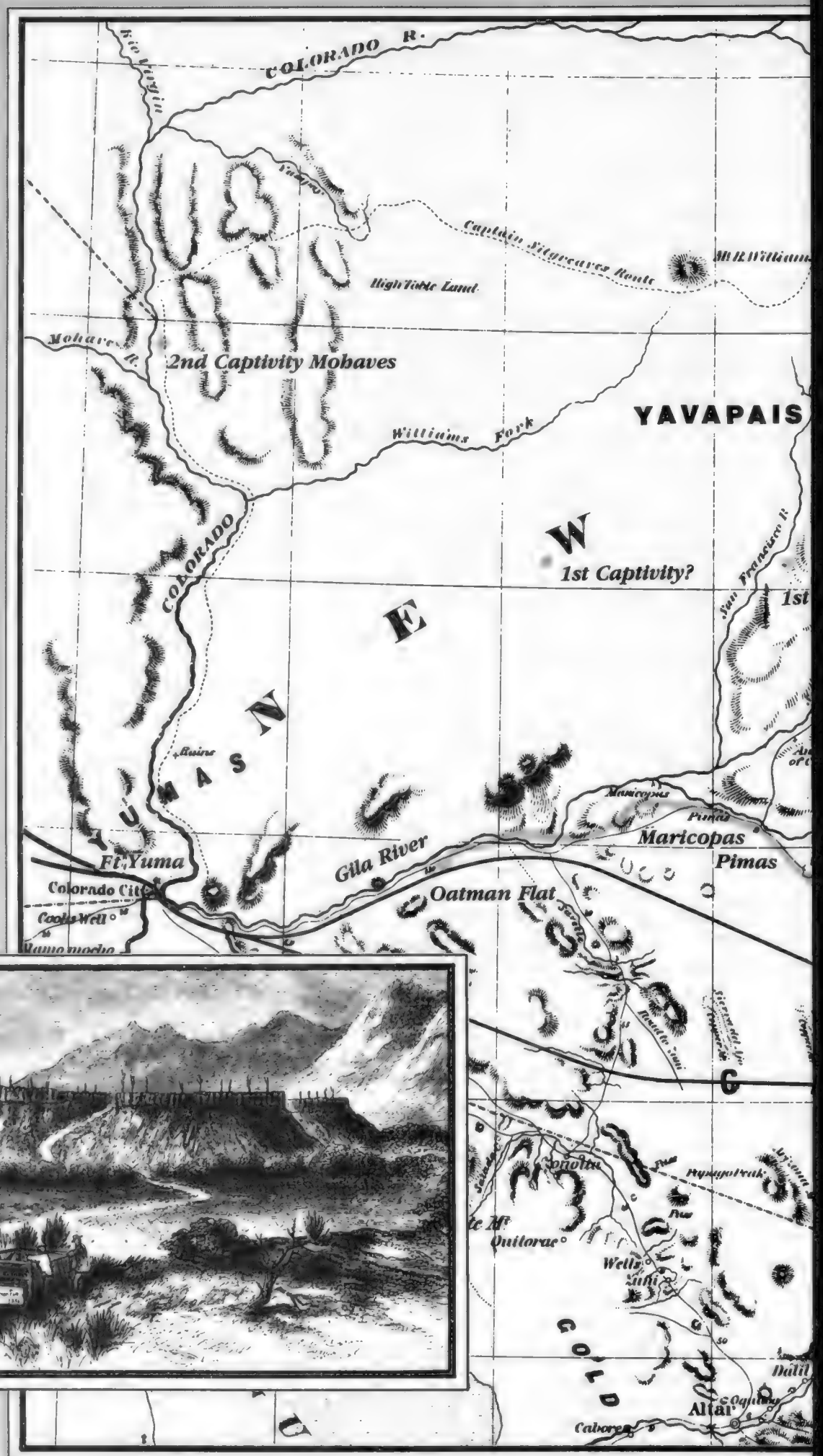
BY RATIONING HIS PEOPLE to one and a half biscuits a day and trying to live off the land, eating hawks and coyote soup, Oatman managed to get his charges safely to Tucson on January 15, 1851. He had bypassed Tubac, virtually abandoned to the Apaches. The gringos were urged to remain in Tucson to strengthen the isolated pueblo. This time, they listened. The whole party laid over to recuperate, and four families decided to stay for at least a year. They began grain farming and stock raising but remained only ten weeks before the "California fever" once more seized them and drove them westward.

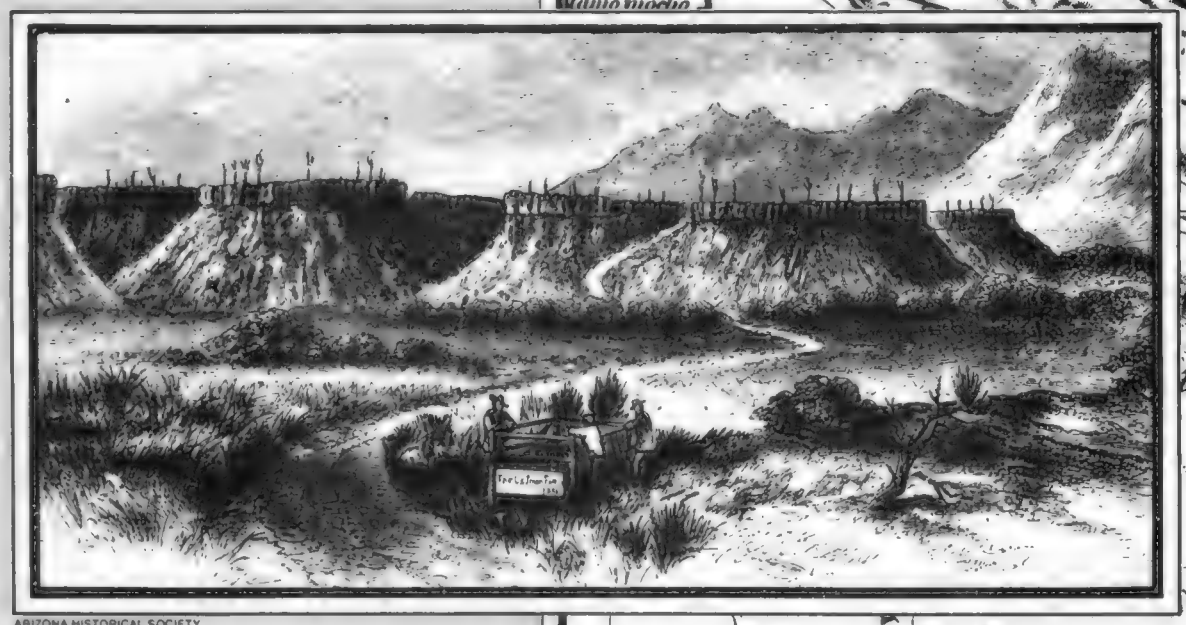
After a bare month's rest, Oatman was determined to press on ahead of the others. Now, only the Wilders and Kelleys were willing to follow him. Even young Olive seemed to doubt the wisdom of her father's move. A half-dozen years later, looking back, she recalled that departure from Tucson: "With scant supplies, a long journey and hostile Indians to contend with, our hearts saddened as we thought of our desperate situation."

The party nursed its emaciated, staggering oxen across the Ninety Mile Desert via Picacho and Casa Grande. At last the wagons reached the great bend of the Gila River and the last outposts of safety on the very rim of *Apachería*, the villages of the Pimas and Maricopas. The villagers warned the emigrants that the Gila Trail ahead was "very bad" because of Apaches. This advice decided the Wilders and Kelleys to remain. They pinned their hopes on farming and on trading with their hosts until supplies might arrive from friends or the United States government. Then they would continue to California.

Tragic Trail of the Oatman Family Trek

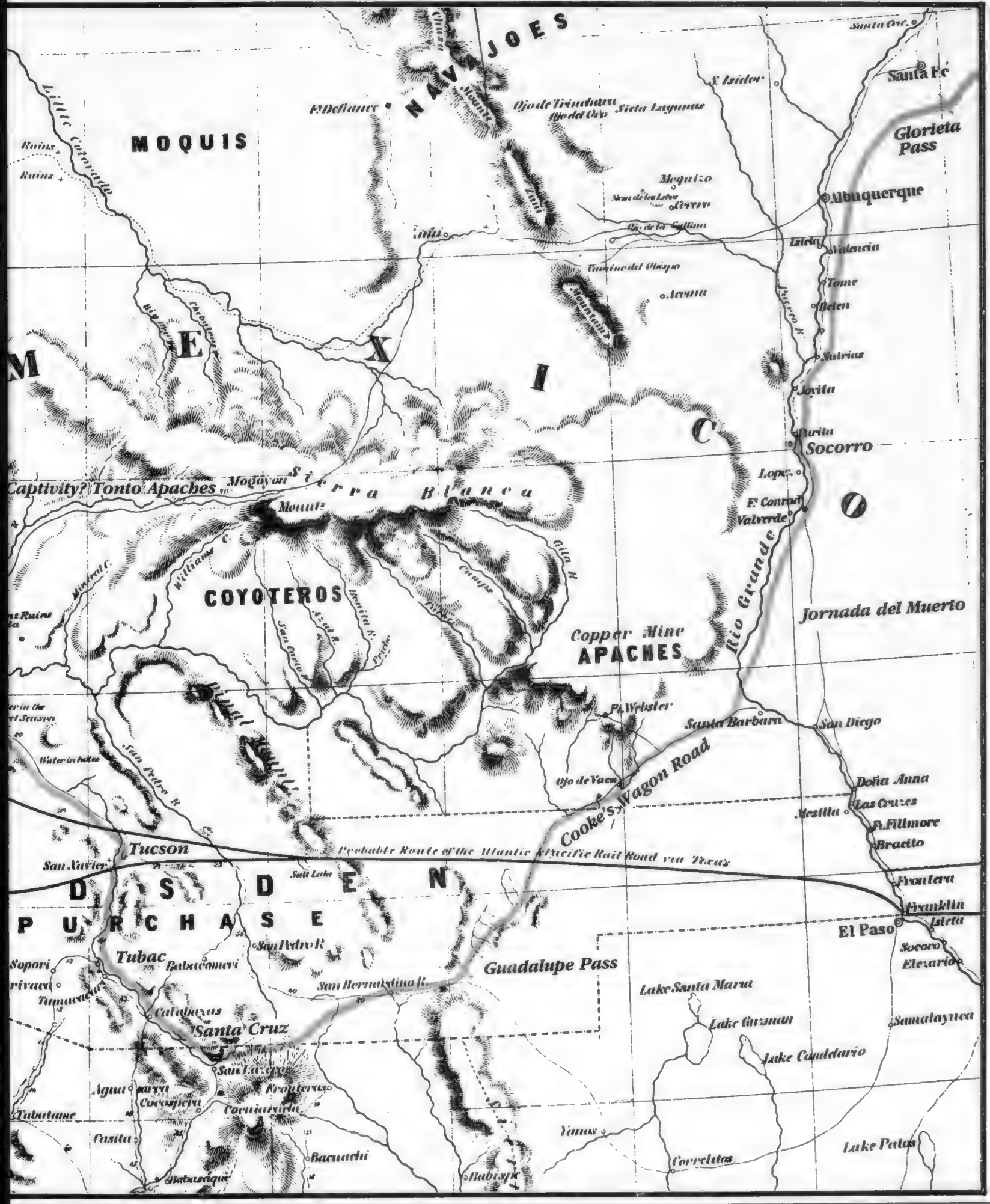
The orange line moving across the map from east to west follows the approximate route taken by the Oatman party in New Mexico Territory. Leaving Independence, Missouri, in August of 1850, the bickering group of fifty-two Brewsterites divided upon reaching Glorieta Pass near Santa Fe. The Oatman family and about a dozen friends chose to take a southerly route which led down the Rio Grande, along Cooke's Wagon Road, north by the Santa Cruz River, and west on the Gila Trail. On the last leg of the journey, the Oatmans forged ahead alone, meeting their tragic fate at the hands of Yavapais on a mesa now known as Oatman Flat. The area where Olive and Mary Ann spent the first part of their captivity is not definitely established, but the two most likely locations are indicated on the map. The sad tale of enslavement ended with the second captivity among the Mohaves in the Mohave River Valley near the Colorado, and the return of Olive to Fort Yuma in 1856. The inset below shows the mesa where the massacre occurred.





ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ADAPTED FROM EHRENBERG MAP, 1854. ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Oatman was reckless enough to gamble on getting through to Fort Yuma before his animals collapsed and his children starved.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

Lorenzo Oatman (above) is an unsung hero in Arizona history. Though just a boy in his teens in the 1850s, he never gave up hope that Olive and Mary Ann were still alive. He worked diligently for five years toward their rescue when everyone else said such efforts were futile.

Captain Oatman hurried on ahead with only his family. Olive blamed this wrong-headed decision, which she termed her father's most severe trial, on the lack of food and on his mistrust of the Pimas and Maricopas. She wrote: "He was in a sad dilemma. If he went on, he must now go alone with his helpless family and expose them to the dangers of the way.... If he remained, starvation and perhaps death from the treacherous savages [the Pimas and Maricopas!] would be their fate."

Whether Oatman was impelled by dreams of California gold, fear of the Pimas and Maricopas, or by concern for the shortage of food, he was reckless enough to gamble his family's lives on getting through to Fort Yuma before his animals should collapse and his children starve. As Oatman wrestled with his dilemma, his mind was made up by one of those accidents of fate which litter our history. The entomologist Dr. John Lawrence LeConte, who was resting at the Pima villages with his Sonoran guide, told Oatman that he had not seen a single hostile Indian in two recent treks along the Gila Trail. This report decided Roys. In resolving Oatman's quandary, LeConte became—like Oatman himself, with his suicidal folly—a virtual accessory to massacre and enslavement at Oatman Flat.

The Oatmans were not completely reassured by LeConte's experience. A strong sense of foreboding disturbed the family as it set forth on February 11, 1851, from Maricopa Wells. Oatman goaded his pathetic, protesting animals onward—two half-dead oxen and, staggering in their yokes, his bewildered milch cows. So slow was their progress that LeConte overtook the family on February 15 as he made his way back to California. Oatman estimated that they were 140 miles up the "Hela" still from Fort Yuma.

When he left the Oatmans, LeConte carried a letter from Roys to the commandant at Fort Yuma, asking him to send food, harness, and fresh animals. "Captain" Oatman was now becoming desperate. "Honorable Sir: I am under the necessity of calling upon you for assistance. There is myself, wife and seven children and, without help, we must perrish....I have been robbed of my animals so that I have not sufficient in their present condition to take me through...."

Just thirty miles west of the spot where he left the Oatmans, LeConte and his guide lost their horses to Cu-cha-no or Quechan (Yuma) raiders. Both men proceeded on foot, the Doctor hurrying the guide ahead to the Fort for help, after placing a note of warning on a tree beside the Gila Trail. Meanwhile, in spite of their agonizingly slow progress along the north side of the Gila River, the Oatmans not only missed seeing Painted Rocks (on the south bank), a major landmark of the trail, but, somehow, missed LeConte's warning.

About eighty miles from the mouth of the Gila, the Oatmans crossed to the south bank. Once on the Sonoran side, they unloaded the wagon and double-teamed it, joining in as draft

animals along with the oxen and milch cows, pushing and hauling the vehicle up the rough, sixty-foot, basalt-topped escarpment. It was late Tuesday afternoon, February 18, 1851, when they got the wagon up on the flat of the lava caprock. They then went back to the river and packed the baggage up to reload. Around sunset, they sat down to eat. Following this last supper came the Indian attack which resulted in the capture of Olive and Mary Ann and the death of all the others except Lorenzo.

WHEN LORENZO REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS after the departure of the Indians, he was too horrified to view the scene around the wagon. Instead, he began to stagger back toward Maricopa Wells. Creeping and dragging himself, he encountered two helpful Pimas, but remembering his father's mistrust of them, he continued on until he ran into the Wilders and Kelleys, who were resuming their journey. Willard Wilder and Robert Kelley recruited two Mexicans and some Pimas to ride with them to Oatman Flat to bury the dead. They found only six bodies, mangled by coyotes. Obviously, Olive and Mary Ann had been taken prisoner. The men had no way of digging proper graves in the volcanic, rocky soil of the mesa; so, they gathered the bodies together and heaped a large pile of stones over them. (The remains were reburied several times and finally moved to the river for reinterment by Arizona pioneer Charles Poston.)

The Yavapais had driven Olive and Mary Ann, now barefoot and stripped of much of their clothing, over sharp stones and spiny cacti, which lacerated and punctured their feet. The rough terrain was moonlit, but the girls were soon covered with cuts and bruises from both falls and beatings. Little Mary Ann was not strong enough to travel all night without stopping; so, a brave threw the seven-year-old girl over his back like a sack of meal and carried her. But Olive, not yet fourteen, was expected to keep up the pace—"the speed of a horse," she recalled bitterly. When she fell behind, she was beaten without mercy until she caught up. After a brief halt at noon, the girls were herded on again until nightfall when they arrived at a mountainous camp without timber or running water. They had left a bloody trail, but there was no one to follow it.

As best as Olive could tell, the Yavapais (whom she always mistook for Tonto Apaches) fled northeast from the massacre site to camp either near Date Creek and modern Congress, Arizona, or in the Mazatzal Mountains to the east. There the girls were mocked, reviled, spat upon, and humiliated in every way that the savages could devise.

During their entire captivity, the sisters were drudges, slaves. They were sentenced to unending labor, carrying water from rock "tanks" in ollas which they learned to balance on their heads, or foraging across the malpais for firewood. When Olive and Mary Ann grew tired from their tasks, they were beaten. If they failed to understand some gutteral command, they were beaten again.

The girls soon picked up enough of the Yavapai tongue to get by. They were told that they were slaves forever; they would never be allowed to return to their people. When their rags fell off, the sisters tied skirts of bark around their waists in

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The death by starvation of little Mary Ann was traumatic. Olive's grief at her sister's death so moved the Mohaves that they permitted Mary Ann's burial in her garden plot near Needles, although it was contrary to their religious custom of cremation.

imitation of the Indian women. Though there was no snow, the cold winter of 1851 brought suffering.

Fortunately for the girls, greed equalled vindictiveness among the Yavapais. When some Mohaves offered two horses, two blankets, and a few pounds of beads for Olive and Mary Ann, it was a deal.

Once again, the barefoot young slaves were subjected to a cruel forced march, ten or eleven days of scrambling over rough country "like horses" in Olive's recall. She guessed that they traveled three hundred miles to the Mohave Valley on the Colorado above Needles. The *Los Angeles Star* later reported, "Not an act of kindness nor a word of sympathy had been addressed to her by her captors, who treated her and her sister as slaves." But once they arrived in the Mohave village, the situation changed.

The Chief, Espanesay (Español—Spaniard?), perhaps Moa-auch Qua-niel or Black Bottom, adopted the girls as his own children. He allotted each a blanket, food, a garden-plot, and seed. They were allowed to till the land, raising crops of corn, beans, and melons. Both girls were tattooed with the tribal mark, the *ki-e-chook,* of five vertical lines from lower lip to chin.

But now Nature made slaves of the Oatman girls—and of the Mohaves. The normal overflow of the Colorado, which irrigated the gardens, failed in 1853. Famine followed drought, and Mary Ann starved to death, along with many Indians. Olive nearly died, being saved only by her stronger constitution and the pity shown by the Chief's wife, who ground up

Five years after the massacre and enslavement at Oatman Flat, a ransom of beads and blankets freed Olive from her captivity.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Upon arrival at Fort Yuma after her rescue, Olive was embarrassed by her skimpy Indian skirt of bark and buried herself in the sand until officers' wives could provide her with civilized clothing. When an interpreter asked her name, Olive laboriously scratched in the damp sand "Olive Oatman."

precious seed corn into a gruel for her. Olive's warm gratitude was mingled with grief over Mary Ann's death.

For five years, the fate of the Oatman sisters was unclear to the public. The first real word of the girls reached a Captain García of the Mexican army in 1855. A Mexican soldier told García that the Oatman sisters were being held by Mohaves. (Actually, Mary Ann was dead, but her place had been taken by a Mexican girl who was confused with her. The Mexicana was eventually released with Olive.)

In April of 1855, García sent a message to the commanding officer at Fort Yuma, urging him to find a certain Mohave named Francisco, who was visiting the California side of the river. "If he is sought for and obtained, I believe you would acquire true information by this Mohave Indian about the unhappy captives." Runners were then sent out from Fort Yuma to various tribes, offering ransom for the recovery of prisoners.

THE REAL BREAKTHROUGH did not come until January of 1856. Informed that under certain conditions a Yuma Indian, also named Francisco, would fetch Olive to Yuma, the Fort's commanding officer supplied beads and blankets and reported to his superiors, "I immediately directed him to go for her."

On February 22, 1856, almost exactly five years after the massacre, Francisco brought Olive and the latina to Fort Yuma. Upon approaching the whites, Olive threw herself on the ground to cover her nakedness. She would not get up until clothing, borrowed from officers' wives, was brought to her. The girl could remember only a few words of English, but when asked her name in Mohave, she answered eagerly, "Olive Oatman."

Fort Yuma's officers clubbed together to make up a purse for Olive and to supply her with clothes. They placed her in the care of "a female residing there." (This temporary guardian is believed to have been none other than "The Great Western," Mrs. Sarah Bowman-Phillips, a real "character" who appears in many accounts of the Southwest during the Mexican War and later.) She promised to provide Olive with every attention until relatives or friends should arrive to take care of her, "and [to] endeavor to wean her from all savage tastes or desire to return to Indian life."

Continued on page 59

· The Pulitzer Prize Collection ·

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On the Trail of the Cowboys Fame and Fortune for CAA

by Manya Winsted

COURTESY OF PHOENIX ART MUSEUM © 1980 BY TOM LOVELL

Cooling the Big 50

The Gold Award for Drawing went to Tom Lovell for Cooling the Big 50. *The Santa Fe artist worked as an illustrator for magazines for nearly forty years.*

THERE WAS A LOT OF FINE ART THERE. But, an awful lot of emphasis is being put on the big numbers more than on the philosophy, the idea, the art. When you read about it later, we sometimes come off sounding like a bunch of dumb cowboys fleecing collectors.''

Joe Beeler was giving a frank appraisal of the recent Cowboy Artists of America Fifteenth Annual Preview and Sale at the Phoenix Art Museum. One of the founders of the Cowboy Artists association, Beeler continued: ''The sales become so important that there's more chance of the art becoming dictated by collectors and judges. Artists find themselves trying to please collectors and not themselves.''

Good western drink and handshakes all around marked the birth of the Cowboy Artists of America in a Sedona saloon almost sixteen years ago. Frustrated at not being taken seriously, four western artists met to form an association which would bring recognition and the opportunity to sell their artwork. The years since that first meeting have brought fame and great fortune to members of the CAA.

Riding the current wave of popularity for all things western, the Phoenix preview and sale was the most successful, and frantic, in the association's history, bringing in total receipts of about $1.46 million. Had the Cowboy sale been conducted as an auction, the total very probably would have been substantially higher. CAA members set prices for their works beforehand, and the sale was conducted under a plan which selects purchasers by chance.

With over two thousand guests jamming the Museum halls, prospective purchasers had only an hour and a half to push through the crowd, view over eighty paintings and sculptures, and fill out intent-to-purchase slips. When the viewing period was over, one name was drawn from the intent-to-purchase slips for each artwork. If the lucky person claimed his privilege within fifteen minutes, he was the fortunate buyer and could purchase the work for the price already set by the artist.

Considering present demand for cowboy art, the CAA method of selling works at their annual Show results in a good deal of disappointment and sometimes in a touch of comic opera. At the recent Phoenix event, many people who have attended the sale for years, hoping to be drawn for *anything,* were nonplussed to come off empty handed again while a ten-year-old from Chicago won the luck of the draw for two of the exhibits.

When the CAA was formed in 1965, its overriding purpose was to gain recognition for artists depicting the West. The founding artists believed strongly in the value of their art and in the value of preserving western tradition. They held a conviction which is still honored—that CAA members are as much cowboys as artists—and established the custom of an annual trailride. Today, many members give as much time to ranching and rodeos as they do to studio work.

The first CAA art exhibit was held in 1966 at the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma. Now held annually at the Phoenix Art Museum, the event draws thousands from across the United States, Canada, and Europe. No longer struggling for recognition, CAA members may well be experiencing some intoxicating flights of fancy as buyers vie for the privilege of paying large sums for western art. Top price for a work in the recent sale was $80,000. **AW**

Manya Winsted *is an editor and free-lance writer in Phoenix.*

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COURTESY OF PHOENIX ART MUSEUM (c) 1980 BY MELVIN WARREN

When Cowboys Get Edgy

Melvin Warren won the Gold Award for the oil above, as well as Best of Show and the Memorial Award. His work was also shown at the special Cowboy exhibit at the Grand Palais in Paris during the ninety-first Salon of the Société des Artistes Indépendants.

COURTESY OF PHOENIX ART MUSEUM (c) 1980 BY J. N. SWANSON

Moonlight Mosaic

A very different style of painting at this year's CAA Show was exhibited by J. N. Swanson in his Moonlight Mosaic *(left). The artist began as a professional horseshoer, painting in his spare time.*

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Because of the account that Olive gave after her rescue, it has always been assumed that she was eager to return to white society. Soon regaining her English, Olive at first told reporters that the Mohaves said that she could go to the white settlements any time she pleased but that she had been afraid to do so because she did not trust them. Later she insisted that the Indians warned her and Mary Ann that if the girls tried to flee, the Mohaves would follow to the very settlements "and would torment us in the most painful manner if we were to be recaptured." Olive told her interviewers that she had to conceal her great joy at the idea of rescue, for fear that the Mohaves would change their minds and prevent her release.

Was it, perhaps, necessary to "wean" Olive from a desire to return to Indian life? She was not reluctant to leave her brutish starving experience with the Mohaves. But she must have had second thoughts if, as some said, she left behind at least two half-blood children. Writers of the time not only kept Olive's Mormonism secret, they also labeled as apocryphal the story about her children (shameful to Victorians) and united in protecting the chaste reputation of the modest and ladylike Olive. The *Alta* joined the *Star* in insisting: "During her long captivity, she has invariably been treated with that civility and respect due her sex. She has not been made a wife, as has been heretofore erroneously reported, but has remained single and her defenceless situation entirely respected during her residence among the Indians."

Possibly some readers even believed this, but Susan Thompson (Olive's dear friend on the emigrant train) stated flatly that Olive became the wife of the Mohave Chief's son and that she was the mother of two little boys at the time of her ransom. Another story represented at least one of Olive's Indian children as a girl. The *Reese River Reveille* (Austin, Nevada) of May 23, 1863, described the five Indian children adopted by Washington ("Wash") Jacobs of Austin and Jacobsville, Nevada, when he was the agent for the Butterfield Stage Company at Oatman Flat in 1858: "One was a beautiful, light-haired, blue-eyed girl, supposed to have been a child of the unfortunate Olive Oatman, so long a captive among the Apaches [sic]. . . . On returning home one day, Mr. Jacobs found the children suffering from severe diarrhoea, caused by a thoughtless fellow feeding them only on meat. Four died before relief could be had, and among them the little girl, 'the angel of the house.' It was a sad event, bitterly wept over and not to be erased from memory."

After her rescue, Olive Oatman had many weeping spells. Perhaps not all were caused by memories of murder and brutality and her grief for Mary Ann. But if she wept for her half-Mohave children, she never saw them again. It was the last heartbreak of many which composed the tragedy of Oatman Flat.

Epilogue:

Olive was reunited with her brother Lorenzo at Fort Yuma and both were given a home by Susan Thompson's parents in El Monte, California, in April of 1856. In June, the young Oatmans were taken to the home of their cousin, Harrison B. Oatman, in the Rogue River Valley of Oregon. They returned

Victorians could not admit that Olive bore two Indian children.

to California to attend the University of the Pacific, then in Santa Clara, during its 1857–58 academic year. In March of 1858 they accompanied the author of their best-selling biography, the Reverend R. B. Stratton, to New York. Olive lived with relatives near Rochester; Lorenzo went to Illinois and began to raise a family but died young. Their book went through several editions and a remarkable sale, but the only play on the subject, *The Oatman Family* by actor-manager-playwright Charles E. Bingham, was a one-performance failure (September 9, 1857) at San Francisco's American Theater. However, Olive took to the boards herself, as a lecturer rather than as an actress. She spoke about her Southwest experiences in Rochester, Syracuse, and elsewhere in order to raise funds for churches—and to plug Stratton's volume.

Romantic and sentimental Victorians could not bring themselves to accept as fact the story that Olive Oatman left at least two half-breed children in the desert. But many, like E. Conklin in his *Picturesque Arizona* (1878), were quite ready to believe the melodramatic tale that she died, before 1877, in a New York insane asylum. Actually, when Olive vanished from the public eye it was not into lunacy but matrimony. She married John B. Fairchild in Rochester in 1865 and lived a long, and presumably happy, life before she died in 1903 at the age of sixty-five in Sherman, Texas. **AW**

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

One must start, but not end, the study of the Oatman affair with Royal B. Stratton, *Captivity of the Oatman Girls* either in the two San Francisco editions of 1857, the Chicago version of the same year, the New York editions of 1858 and 1859, or the beautiful Mallette Dean-illustrated Grabhorn Press volume of 1935—even the mundane reprints by Literature House, 1970, and Triumph Press, 1976. (But not the abridged Oregon account of 1909.) General accounts which tell the story well include: J. Ross Browne, *Adventures in the Apache Country* (1868); J. P. Dunn, *Massacre of the Mountains* (1886); Samuel Hughes, "The Murder at Oatman's Flat," *Arizona Graphic*, October 26, 1899; and Sharlot Hall, "Olive A. Oatman, Her Captivity With the Apache Indians and Her Later Life," *Out West*, September 19, 1908. The best account-in-brief is Edward J. Pettid, "The Oatman Story," *Arizona Highways*, November 1968. Two informative articles are: William B. Rice, "The Captivity of Olive Oatman, A Newspaper Account" (extracted from his book on the *Los Angeles Star*), *California Historical Society Quarterly*, June 1942; and Alice Bay Maloney, "Some Oatman Documents" in the same issue of that *Quarterly*. Of great value as a cross-check on Stratton is Susan Thompson's reminiscence in Virginia V. Root, *Following the Pot of Gold* (1960?). It must be used with care but, then too, so must Stratton's work. Interesting source material and easily the best bibliography of the subject is in Edward J. Pettid, "Olive Ann Oatman's Lecture Notes," San Bernardino County Museum Association's *Museum*, Winter 1968. The best description of the haunted flat between Painted Rocks and Agua Caliente is Cloyd Sorensen, Jr., "The Oatman Massacre Site," *The Wrangler* of the San Diego Corral of Westerners, June 1971.

Richard Dillon, *author of the recent* High Steel *and* Great Expectations, *is currently researching the definitive history of the Oatman tragedy. His photo essay on California's Mother Lode mining camps,* Traces of Time, *will be published in May of 1981 by Northland Press.*

THE AMERICAN WEST REVIEW

Last Stand at Rosebud Creek: Coal, Power, and People

by Owen Ulph

Last Stand at Rosebud Creek: Coal, Power, and People *by Michael Parfit (E. P. Dutton, New York, 1980; 304 pp., $15.95).*

In *Last Stand at Rosebud Creek* the white hats and the black hats battle over strip mining for coal on the ranges of Montana. Parfit's account of the struggle of an isolated agrarian community against a pantaphagous power company is "the story of eighteen people who . . . became involved with two units of . . . coal-fired power plants." In this struggle the cowboys and Indians join together with environmentalists against the despoiler.

Holding the drop on its opponents is Montana Power, cocksure of its ends and dedicated to expansion and profits. Expediency dictates means. Confuse and divide opposition. Bribe it with promises of jobs, business opportunity, and lucrative returns from real-estate development. Subsidize legislatures. Corrupt the courts. Shrink not from dissimulation and brazen deception. Above all, cloak corporate goals as "public interest." Activate Operation Brain-Wash. All this is tacit in Parfit's account.

The ineffectiveness of most of the eighteen opponents of the power company is woefully demonstrated at hearings purportedly to determine the environmental impact of the project on threatened areas. Their testimony, included in the text as an abridged transcript, seems shallow and mindless.

Furthermore, Parfit's cross-sectional approach introduces much imaginatively reconstructed detail irrelevant to the theme of his book. In fact, the book lacks a thematic center. The attempt to depict ordinary people drawn into a sordid conflict of competing self-interests results in a purposeless scramble of random scenes. Reliance on garish, often inapt, simile for effect negates the author's professed objectivity. Chattering secretaries, observed through office windows by an iron-worker with itching loins, had lips that "bobbed like apples" and the siren who so aroused him that he fell off the scaffold had "lips that danced." When the tragic protagonist milks his cow, the milk "passes through under his hands in clumps." Such grotesque images are not intentionally humorous.

It would be gratifying to declare that Parfit's portrayal of the struggle at Rosebud Creek unfolds with dramatic intensity, igniting the social conscience of readers by its mood of impending destruction. Unfortunately, it does not.

Parfit, himself, disclaims having answers. In a closing chapter he confesses confusion. "There should be an ending to this book, to this controversy. But there isn't. How can you write a book and be unable or unwilling to produce its theme like an hors d'oeuvre at a social gathering? What is it they want to hear?"

Parfit writhes on his bed of nails. "I feel like a panelist on a television show, shearing through huge thickets of reality to find one stalk of conveniently vigorous opinion. . . . I'm thinking just rote kind of stuff that I've picked up along the way—"

Commendable perspicacity. Parfit is a naive victim of senile humanism, itself a casualty of academic education. Social and behavioral "sciences" have outlawed values from the realm of knowledge except as manifestations of mental states that occasionally illuminate patterns of conduct. Science concerns the *is* and rejects the unquantifiable *ought* as subjective opinion. Truth is equated with fantasy. Befuddled students seeking "meaning," such as Parfit's hippyfied iron-worker, become "lit-majors." But this "discipline," too, has been tainted by scholasticism. Academic dogma leaves only relativism, uncertainty, and disbelief as bases for moral judgment.

How can liberals expose motivation and *prove* hypocrisy? Or reply to blatant cant when the enemy leaves no producible tracks—when moral principles, according to positivist criteria, are meaningless epithets? Parfit's frustration at feeling like a TV panelist is explicable. Panel discussants never frame basic questions. Critical issues surface only by chance to embarrass the cozy collaboration of participants. The object of talk shows—never acknowledged openly—is to exploit controversies without antagonizing any sector of society. It can't be done without sacrificing the program's integrity.

As detached reporting, as a significant case study of a contemporary issue, or as a work of literary craftsmanship, the book fails. Upon completing it, readers with expectations are likely to shrug it off impatiently.

Let us attribute the above sins to the poverty of popular prose confronting complex questions involving cultural *values*. Parfit is no fool, and his soul craves purity. *Last Stand at Rosebud Creek* should be read. But a word of advice: skip the introductory window dressing, begin with Chapter 18, and proceed through Chapter 24. Therein lies the book's lethal core. If you have a shred of sensitivity, your moral constitution will be challenged if not outraged. Return to endure the introductory window dressing or continue to the emasculated finale. This way the crucial issues, which you must grub out for yourself, can emerge without hindrance from the author's filibustering.

Lack of conviction emasculates the book's finale. While readers, awaiting some revelation, sate themselves with words, problems will conveniently fade away. After all, Montana Power is doing to ranchers only what was done to Indians and what our energetic young sibling is trying to do to obsolete Afghans. History, that rough beast, its hour ever at hand, slouches toward its next Last Stand. **AW**

Owen Ulph is Professor of History, Humanities and Environmental Studies at Reed College, and a biased Rancher.

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Children's Books Open Bright Frontiers

by Nancy Bell Rollings

The Gift of the Sacred Dog *by Paul Goble (Bradbury Press, Scarsdale, New York, 1980; 32 pp., illus., $8.95).*

The Snowbird *by Patricia Calvert (Scribner's, New York, 1980; 146 pp., $8.95).*

The Great Desert Race *by Betty Baker (Macmillan, New York, 1980; 127 pp., $8.95).*

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN have often portrayed the West as a faraway place ideal for adventures. Their imaginations eager for the unknown, many children have envisioned a West of gigantic proportions where grizzly bears and buffaloes roam, and cowboys and Indians play out their parts.

Today several writers for children are attempting to paint the West in truer colors. The frontier, they show, was a place that demanded sacrifice even while it offered adventure. These three books are written from different perspectives and in different styles, but they all bring the real West to life.

Paul Goble's *The Gift of the Sacred Dog* powerfully combines pictures and words. As author and illustrator, Goble has created a world of striking images. Drawings as brilliant as Indian beadwork help tell the ancient story of how the horse, or "sacred dog," appeared to the Indians as a blessing from their Great Spirit.

Goble is refreshingly unsentimental in his portrayal of Indian life. *The Gift of the Sacred Dog* begins with a description of suffering in the days before horses: "The people were hungry. They had walked many days looking for buffalo herds....the dogs could no longer be urged to carry their heavy loads."

What is particularly joyous about Goble's treatment of this legend is that he makes a child the link between the people's need and the powers of the Great Spirit. One small boy leaves his family and goes up to pray in the hills. A magnificent animal greater than the dog and faster than the buffalo is the answer to his prayer: "There was thunder in its nostrils and lightning in its legs; its eyes shone like stars, and hair on its neck and tail trailed like clouds."

Like Goble's Caldecott Medal winner *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses* (1979), *The Gift of the Sacred Dog* offers young readers a glorious sense of the unity between man and nature. Goble's interpretations are graceful and powerful. It is no wonder that he himself bears the name "Little Thunder" as an adopted son of the Sioux.

A girl thirteen and "thinner than a pine slat" is the focus of Patricia Calvert's remarkable first novel, *The Snowbird*. Written for children eleven and older, this story is the appealing first-person account of Willanna

Bannerman (Willie, for short), an independent-thinking orphan who leaves Tennessee for her uncle's bleak homestead in the Dakota Territory. The year is 1883.

Like Goble, Calvert does not disguise the hardships of life. Willie's home on the prairies is a "low, disheveled dwelling fashioned higgledy-piggledy out of tar paper, sod, logs, and galvanized tin." "It ain't like you promised me it'd be," Willie's little brother whispers at the sight of their new home, and Willie herself knows it will be difficult to make her dreams come true. The girl's pure white foal, Snowbird, becomes the book's central symbol of the fragility of life and happiness.

The strength of this novel is Calvert's careful characterization—not only of the heroine, but of her kind yet unlucky Uncle John; his flamboyant wife, Belle; July, the hired hand, and Urho, the Swedish boy who wants Willie to marry him someday. These characters appeal to the reader because of their complexity and charm. Through them Willie learns to accept herself and the inescapable hardships of life.

Facts about the Dakota Territory are skillfully blended into Calvert's fiction. With close attention to detail, she describes the isolation of prairie farms, the primitive schooling, the simple family rituals, the life-bringing rhythms of nature. Readers of *The Snowbird* will hope for more from this clearly talented novelist.

In *The Great Desert Race,* Betty Baker offers a humorous tale about the early days of the automobile. Written by a two-time winner of the Western Heritage Award for juvenile books, the story is loosely based on accounts of an actual car race run between Los Angeles and Phoenix every year from 1908 to 1914—a race first won by a steam-powered automobile.

Baker's delightful, if somewhat unlikely, twist is that she puts Alberta Cunningham in the driver's seat with Trudy Philpot as the accompanying mechanic. These young ladies are tired of their adventureless routine in the small California town of San Julio and eagerly agree to prove the merits of the ABCO Steamer by racing it against the town's gasoline-powered automobiles. Alberta's father sells ABCOs, and he's confident of their safety and speed. And so the publicity-getting stunt is arranged despite fussy Mrs. Philpot's fears that the race will ruin the girls' reputations.

Baker has written a lighthearted story, filled with interesting details about early motoring. As Alberta and Trudy make their unusual journey across the Southwest, the reader is drawn into their adventure. Baker's conclusion to *The Great Desert Race* is no less exciting than its start. **AW**

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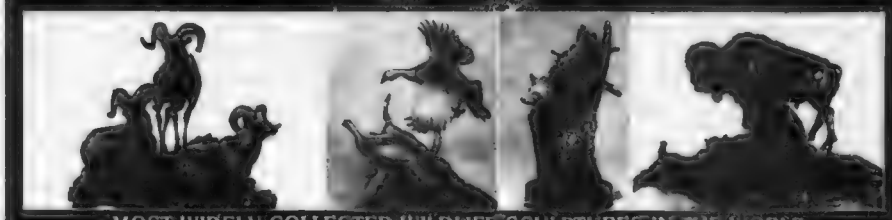

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WESTERN BOOKS IN BRIEF

Red Crow, Warrior Chief *by Hugh A. Dempsey (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1980; 247 pp., illus., notes, biblio., index, $16.50).*

As head chief of the Blood Tribe from 1870 to 1900, Red Crow courageously led his people through a time of transition in which the buffalo disappeared and the white men moved the tribe onto a reserve in southern Alberta, Canada. A great deal of information about the culture of the northern Plains tribes is incorporated into this lively, engrossing narrative.

Winter Brothers: A Season at the Edge of America *by Ivan Doig (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1980; 246 pp., maps, $10.95).*

The author's lyrical musings about his connection with the past form a "dialogue across time" as he interweaves them with excerpts from a pioneer diary. The diary entries evoke the experiences of day-to-day life during the 1850s in the port towns and among the seagoing Indians along the Pacific Northwest coast.

The North Cascadians *by JoAnn Roe (Madrona Publishers, Seattle, 1980; 214 pp., illus., biblio., index, $14.95).*

The author tells of the hardy souls—loggers, miners, sheepherders, road builders—who have struggled for a living in the wild and beautiful northern Cascade mountains of Washington State, a wilderness so rugged that as late as 1972 parts of it still remained untouched. She has based her history on hundreds of interviews with old-timers of the region.

Apaches: A History and Culture Portrait *by James L. Haley (Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1981; 453 pp., illus., maps, notes, biblio., index, $17.95).*

Haley prefaces his history with a richly detailed examination of the customs and myths of the Apache "Lifeway." He feels a cultural understanding of the Apache people can provide deeper insight into the events of their doomed guerrilla warfare against white settlement, which he recounts with impartiality and compassion.

Generations in Clay: Pueblo Pottery of the American Southwest *by Alfred E. Dittert, Jr., and Fred Plog (Northland Press, Flagstaff, Arizona, 1980; 149 pp., illus., maps, append., notes, glossary, biblio., $14.95 paper, $27.50 cloth).*

Numerous photos of exquisite pieces enhance this exploration of the Pueblo Indian art of pottery making. The descriptions of archaeological findings illuminate Pueblo culture as well as the fine points of this art, practiced in the Southwest for almost two thousand years.

Oklahoma Homes: Past and Present *by Charles R. Goins and John W. Morris (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1980; 269 pp., illus., index, $25.00).*

The four hundred photographs comprising this delightful view of Oklahoma architecture encompass a broad spectrum of shelters, from Indian tipis to a contemporary solar house. Many of the homes, such as sod houses and underground dugouts, reflect the influence of the state's climate and culture. Most of them, even from a century or more ago, still stand.

California's Spanish Place Names: What They Mean and How They Got There *by Barbara and Rudy Marinacci (Presidio Press, San Rafael, California, 1980; 267 pp., illus., biblio., append., dictionary/index, $6.95 paper).*

This book is for anyone who has ever enjoyed or puzzled over Spanish names for rivers and mountains, streets and cities of California. It defines hundreds of these ubiquitous place names and tells the fascinating stories behind them. The index doubles as a Spanish to English dictionary.

The Sound of Mountain Water *by Wallace Stegner (E. P. Dutton, New York, 1980; 286 pp., $6.95 paper).*

Many of these fourteen essays masterfully invoke the special feeling of western landscape—the vistas, the sounds, the smells of river rapids and canyon trails. Others probe western history and literature. A Pulitzer Prize winner, Stegner offers thoughtful insights into the deeper meanings behind the changing western experience; he calls this a "book of confrontations."

Beale's Road Through Arizona: Being an Account of the Exploration and Establishment of an Emigrant Road to California Along the 35th Parallel *by Eldon G. Bowman and Jack Smith (Westerners International, Flagstaff Corral, Flagstaff, Arizona, 1979; 27 pp., illus., biblio., $11.00 paper).*

This tightly written, entertaining little volume relates the story of Edward Fitzgerald Beale and his party as they struggled against lack of water, rugged terrain, and misinformed guides to create a road through the southwest desert in 1857 to connect Fort Smith, Arkansas, with California. Beale also experimented, with temporary success, in using camels as beasts of burden for expeditions in this region.

Traces of the Past: A Field Guide to Industrial Archaeology *by David Weitzman (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1980; 229 pp., illus., biblio., index, $17.95).*

A rusty railroad track, an abandoned oil well, an aging bridge—their secrets are opened by this intriguing book, which reawakens the explorer in us all. In a simple and engaging style, Weitzman explains the principles involved in the engineering feats of 100 years ago and shows what stories can be read from the ruins hidden at the edge of many American towns and cities.

Hispanic Folk Music of New Mexico and the Southwest: A Self-Portrait of a People *by John Donald Robb (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1980; 891 pp., illus., biblio., discography, append., index, $35.00).*

Here is a treasury of some seven hundred folk songs from the hispanic Southwest—songs of love and work, patriotism and death. Capturing the oral traditions of an ancient and varied

Continued on page 70

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New!—**Adolph F. Bandelier's The Discovery of New Mexico by the Franciscan Monk Friar Marcos de Niza in 1539**

Madeleine T. Rodack, Translator and Editor

Here is a classic work on de Niza's search for the Seven Cities of Cibola, as set forth by Bandelier in 1886. It draws on archival sources as well as Indian legend to present Fray Marcos as the first white man to see the reputed cities of gold, now thought to be Zuni. Includes Bandelier's notes, plus maps of routes. 136 pp. $10.95 cloth.

Samuel Peter Heintzelman and the Sonora Exploring and Mining Company

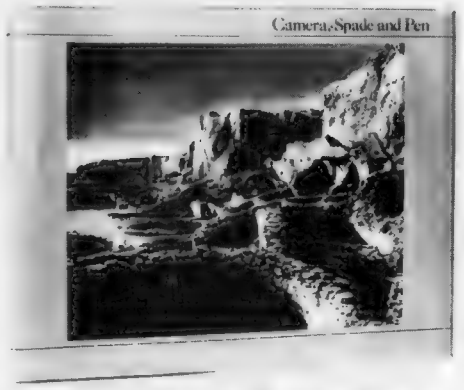
by Diane M. T. North

Heintzelman's journals lend fascinating insights into the economic and political development of the Southwest through their portrayal of mining communities beset by numerous difficulties. Within the historical context provided by Diane North, this period of the soldier and entrepreneur's exploits now comes vividly alive. 248 pp. $7.95 paper, $12.50 cloth.

The Desert Bighorn

Gale Monson & Lowell Sumner, Editors

Bighorn sheep are as much valued for the sight of their profile against a western sky as for that of their horns above a mantelpiece. Now 16 contributors offer a wealth of information on these elusive beasts—from their life history and ecology to guidelines for their protection and preservation. 392 pp. $14.95 paper, $27.50 cloth.



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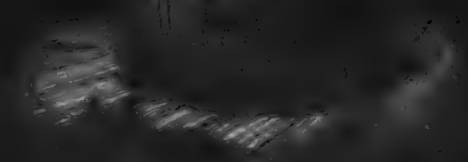

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BOOKS IN BRIEF

(Continued from page 66)

culture, this comprehensive work records melodies and words (both in Spanish and English) which might otherwise be lost to succeeding generations.

Incident at Eagle Ranch: Man and Predator in the American West *by Donald G. Schueler (Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1980; 297 pp., notes, biblio., index, $12.95).*

This fast-paced study illuminates the complex relationship between predators and human society in exploring the feelings and events surrounding the trial of four men accused of killing more than one hundred golden eagles. The author offers a realistic analysis of the predator menace and an innovative solution to this bitter controversy.

Taos: A Painter's Dream *by Patricia Janis Broder (New York Graphic Society, Boston, 1980; 321 pp., illus., notes, chrono., biblio., index, $45.00).*

Offering a comprehensive account of the first generation of Taos artists, Broder considers the life and work of each of those eleven painters. More than three hundred of their paintings are reproduced in this handsome, large-format volume. **AW**

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In this late nineteenth-century snapshot, we see an unceremonious, outdoor haircut in progress at Wyoming's Spur Ranch. Seated on a wooden bench outside the bunkhouse, a cowboy waits for his fellow to finish the job, oblivious to the camera's eye. The only amenity here seems to be a burlap sack keeping hair off the cowboy's back. Unlike his horse, he seems mildly impatient—contemplating, perhaps, how he will cut his barber's hair once roles are reversed. With their matching wooly chaps, these two unnamed cowboys make a likable pair.

Wanda Vasey of LaBarge, Wyoming, submitted this snapshot with interesting details about Spur Ranch. Established by M. E. Post and Francis E. Warren in 1882, the Spur was reputed to be the biggest cattle ranch in the Rocky Mountains, spreading some six thousand acres from the convergence of LaBarge Creek and the Green River. When statehood came to Wyoming in 1890, Warren was elected the first governor.

This western snapshot reminds us that cowboys—however daring—had basic needs too.

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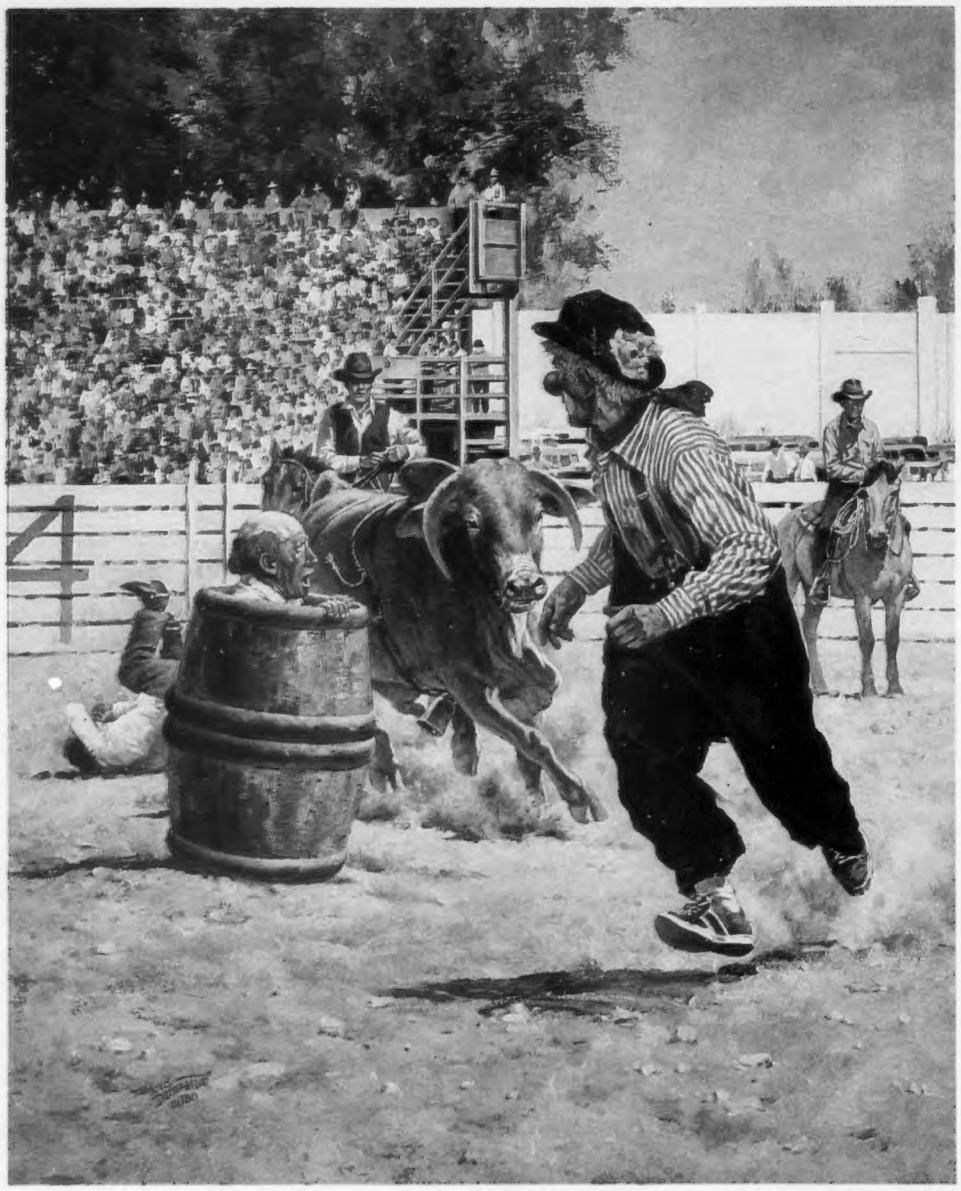
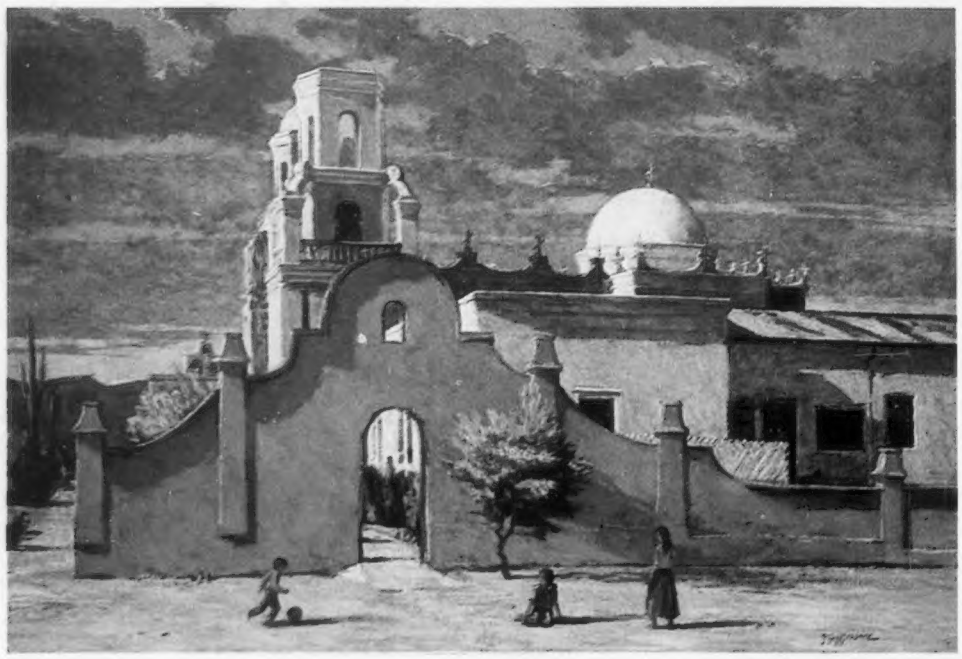


Vic Donahue **"Clown"** oil 30 × 24



Greg Wallace **"Days of Innocence - San Xavier"** oil 24 × 36